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SANDWICHES ■ COLD PLATE WINNERS COOK TO THE 90s ■ PARTNERSHIPS

RESTAURANTSUSA

CAN YOUR EMPLOYEES READ THESE?

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CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SER
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ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

SEMINARS

Basic Foodservice Courses

Dining Room Management
2/20 Chicago, IL
2/21 St. Louis, MO
2/26 Grand Rapids, MI
4/2 Atlanta, GA
4/23 Philadelphia, PA
4/25 New York, NY

Kitchen Management
2/5 Worcester, MA
2/6 Gaithersburg, MD
3/19 Chicago, IL
3/20 St. Louis, MO
4/23 Atlantic City, NJ
4/25 Cincinnati, OH

Foodservice Management Courses

Banquet Management
2/12 Tampa, FL
3/5 Baltimore, MD
3/12 Atlanta, GA
4/23 Chicago, IL
4/24 Detroit, MI

Food Cost Management
2/6 Raleigh, NC
2/7 Miami, FL
3/4 Washington, DC
3/5 Worcester, MA
3/20 Chicago, IL
3/21 Detroit, MI
4/3 Portland, OR
4/4 Seattle, WA
4/27 Denver, CO

Franchising for Growth
3/28 Chicago, IL

Healthy Profits through Nutrition
3/26 Chicago, IL

Labor: Hiring, Training and Retaining
2/6 Hartford, CT
2/7 Newark, NJ
2/27 Chicago, IL
3/12 Pittsburgh, PA
3/13 Alexandria, VA

Off-Premises Catering
1/29-30 Philadelphia, PA
2/5-6 Portland, OR
3/12-13 Chicago, IL
3/19-20 San Diego, CA

Profitability
2/6 San Francisco, CA
2/7 Los Angeles, CA
2/27 Minneapolis, MN
4/23-24 Minneapolis, MN
3/27 Chicago, IL
4/23 Boston, MA

Promoting Your Restaurant
3/5 Chicago, IL

Successful Buffet Management
2/5 Chicago, IL
2/26 Lexington, KY
3/26 Boston, MA
4/2 Los Angeles, CA
4/3 San Francisco, CA
4/23 Baltimore, MD

Takeout Delivers Profits
3/26 Louisville, KY
3/27 Orlando, FL
4/2 Chicago, IL

Note: *All Chicago seminars are held in The Educational Foundation's Conference Center at 250 S. Wacker Drive.*

For information, contact:
Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association
250 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 715-1010 or 1-800-522-7578

If your company is interested in our in-house programs, call or write to the attention of Jeff Harrison at the above address.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Financial Officers
4/4-6 Scottsdale, AZ

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/17-18 Chicago, IL

Internal Auditors
4/24-27 Key West, FL

Labor Relations
2/22-23 Mobile, AL

Large Independent Operators
1/30-2/2 Honolulu, HI

Management Information Systems
4/17-20 Nashville, TN

Marketing Executives
5/16-20 Chicago, IL

Multi-Unit Architects, Engineers and Construction Officers (MAECO)
5/16-18 Chicago, IL

Quality Assurance
4/18-20 Atlanta, GA

Safety Officers
1/15-18 Las Vegas, NV

Tax Executives
4/4-6 Scottsdale, AZ

For more information on specific study groups, contact: Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Get Sanitation Smart

The in-house training seminar, "Applied Foodservice Sanitation," is the newest addition to the nationally recognized sanitation certification program from the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.

AFS trains, tests and certifies management and key employees in sanitation practices. The cost-effective in-house format allows the practices to be taught at the same time in the same place at your discretion.

Twenty-one other foodservice topics–from the basics on up–are also available from the educational foundation in this format.

So don't be left in the dark–join the thousands of other industry professionals who have developed their skills with foundation seminars. For more information on setting up an in-house training program, call Jeff Harrison at 1-800-522-7578.

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RESTAURANTS

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Harris H. "Bud" Rusitzky, President
Serv-Rite Food Service and Consulting Corporation
Pittsford, New York

Reflecting on success

Mandated-health benefits proposal to pick up steam

Renewed focus on fast food labeling

The beginning of the '90s is a good time to reflect on the state of the foodservice industry. As reported in last month's issue of ***Restaurants USA,*** foodservice is enjoying continued economic health—10 consecutive years of real growth. Although competition has grown stiffer, total sales continue to expand.

On the legislative front, the industry has also recently scored major victories—namely, the repeal of Section 89, the extension of TJTC and the long delay in passage of minimum-wage legislation—legislation which, in its final form, calls for a significantly lower increase than initially proposed.

But the new decade will bring more challenges. The issue of mandated health benefits—actively opposed by association and other business lobbyists—is likely to pick up steam as Congress reconvenes at the end of this month. Although the idea of mandated benefits has been around for several years, Congress should find it more appealing as it looks for solutions to the nation's health-insurance crisis that do not require federal funding.

The National Restaurant Association has been working closely with elected representatives, including Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and members of the Pepper Commission, to develop alternatives that would provide health insurance for employees without harming businesses – particularly small businesses. Alternatives include Medicaid expansion, a 100-percent deduction for health-insurance costs for all businesses—not just corporations, preemption of all state benefit mandates, malpractice reform, and revision of the underwriting practices of insurance companies. Look for debate on this issue to intensify as Congress reconvenes.

We can also expect a renewed focus on the issue of fast food labeling in 1990. Last year, legislators and regulators began anew their push for comprehensive revision of food-labeling requirements. Although three bills under congressional consideration exempt restaurants from labeling requirements, the Food and Drug Administration recently issued a call for public comment on mandatory fast food labeling. The association testified against labeling before panels examining the issue.

Left to our own devices, our industry has proven responsible in responding voluntarily to customers' requests for information. This voluntary initiative is our best argument when debating the labeling issue—and it is one we plan to put forward emphatically as we deal with legislative and/or regulatory attempts to mandate fast food labeling.

These are only two examples of issues that will command the association's attention and energies in 1990. There are more--and we need your help. The strength of any organization is in its membership, and past victories have demonstrated that our association is no exception. You have responded forcefully to our calls for action in the past. Our successes in 1990 and beyond depend upon your continued involvement.

Solid-waste symposium takes place this month

Food editors to meet in DC

Register now for Monterey Wine Festival

Look for nutrition-awareness study and operations questionnaires

The association's symposium on solid waste is being held in Washington DC this month. Out of this day-long session we expect to develop new ideas and a strengthened commitment toward reducing the nation's solid-waste problem. ***Restaurants USA*** will include a full report on the symposium for those unable to attend.

At the end of this month, I will represent the association at The International Food Media Conference, an annual meeting of the nation's food editors to be held January 31–February 4 in Washington DC. At the conference, I will share with food editors from the nation's preeminent newspapers the association's viewpoints on issues and trends affecting foodservice in the 1990s. It is hoped that these editors will come away with a wealth of story ideas—ideas that focus on restaurants and the pleasures of dining out.

Now is the perfect time to make your reservations to join us in magnificent Monterey, California, for the Monterey Wine Festival, March 18–20. The two-and-a-half-day festival features gala feasts and receptions, informative seminars and—most importantly—250 of the finest wines that the great wine-producing state of California has to offer. Call 1-800-525-FEST for more information and to register.

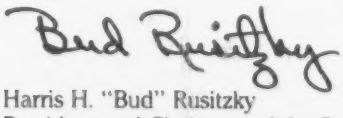
Key members of the association should look in their mailboxes toward the end of the month for a complimentary copy of the association's newest Current Issues Report, *Nutrition Awareness in the Foodservice Industry*. This timely report includes consumption trends as they reflect nutrition concerns, information on how foodservice is catering to these trends and a look into the future of nutrition awareness in restaurants. Additional copies are available for purchase through the association's publications department.

Key members should also be watching for the 1990 Restaurant Industry Operations questionnaire, which will be mailed this month. Results of the survey are used to compile the annual *Restaurant Industry Operations Report*.

This report—among the most widely read of the association's publications—outlines financial operating data of full and limited-menu tableservice restaurants, fast food operations and cafeterias, and it gives operators a base from which to compare their own operations figures. For the first time this year, information on benefits costs will also be included. Key members who fill out the questionnaire and return it by February 26 will receive a free copy of the 1990 report when it is published later this year.

We welcome the 50 new members who joined the National Restaurant Association last month. Your commitment to the association will further strengthen our unified effort to represent the foodservice industry.

Sincerely,



Harris H. "Bud" Rusitzky
President and Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY:
THE ABCs OF LITERACY—PROGRAMS FROM THE WORKPLACE TO THE CLASSROOM

12 Taking part in the national effort to put an end to illiteracy is no longer a matter of social commitment—it is a matter of survival. Just like other labor-intensive businesses, the foodservice industry has many employees with poor or no reading skills. This article—the first in a series on "Restaurants and the Community"—outlines the problem and profiles restaurants that have implemented literacy programs.

SPECIALS

10 What's ahead in the '90s?
Gold Plate award winners from the 1980s forecast what restaurateurs can expect to happen in the areas of service, food, decor, government and management in the 1990s.

16 Partnerships—how to make them work
The basic ingredient in a winning partnership is "chemistry"—that often intangible but essential personality mix. But there is much more to a successful partnership than being able to work well together. The partners profiled in this article describe how their very different styles work and discuss the pitfalls they avoid.

Facing page 20
Index
Pull out and save the 1989 index of articles appearing in ***Restaurants USA.*** It can be a handy reference tool for retrieving information about the foodservice industry.

20 In a perfect world all restaurants would have . . .
Call buttons to summon waiters, fax machines and telephones at each table are just some of the innovations restaurant patrons would like to see, according to a recent Zagat survey.

22 The new sandwiches—exotic, eclectic and ever so edible
Today's sandwiches are much more than the typical clubs, reubens and heros. With the growing popularity of sandwiches on menus, here are some ideas to help you expand your repertoire.

24 Thailand—a hot destination
Why are American chefs, restaurant owners, cookbook authors and food writers flocking to Thailand? To check out firsthand Thai cuisine—the new star of Asian cooking—noted for its harmonious blending of the spicy, sweet, sour, salty and aromatic.

Cover photo by Sarah Hood; ordering carousel courtesy of Adams Burch, Tuxedo, Maryland; location courtesy of Herb's, Washington DC

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The "Reading Rocket" is on its way

JELL-O Desserts and General Foods USA launched "The JELL-O Reading Rocket" as the 1989/90 school year began. The Reading Rocket is a national reading appreciation and motivational program, currently offered in nine cities across the United States, with plans for more in the future. This year the program is expected to reach 1 million children in the third and fourth grades.

JELL-O provides free parent and teacher reading packets, teaching aids and interactive "JELL-O Reading Rocket" storybooks, developed by the Children's Television Workshop (producer of "Sesame Street" and other children's programming). JELL-O also provides a free brochure for parents called "A Galaxy of Reading Tips" to encourage reading at home.

The storybook, *The Great Space Chase*, follows the travels of a friendly alien in pursuit of a fugitive who is "light-years overdue" in returning a library book. Stops along the way include visits to the planets of mystery, humor, history and poetry—a delightful way to introduce children to different genres.

Domino's writes to employees for ideas

A new "bottom-up" approach. **"How would you like to be in my position?" is the theme of some 40,000 postcards being packaged for mailing to many of the 5,000 Domino's Pizza stores around the United States.**

"Companies such as ours are faced with the challenge to keep in touch with our field—the people who work in our stores," says Mike Orcutt, vice president of operations and the executive in charge of day-to-day operations of Domino's Pizza stores. "Without their effort, we wouldn't be in business. We want their input." That is why Orcutt is asking employees for ideas and opinions in his "If you were the boss" campaign. He also is promising to respond to each suggestion.

Rax targets "couch potatoes"

Nobody likes to be part of the ...niture. **That's what Rax Restaurants, Inc., in Columbus, Ohio, is counting on as it rolls out its new ad campaign, targeted to "couch potato" customers. The ad introduces Rax's grilled-chicken sandwich and urges customers to take part in a Hawaiian Pro Bowl getaway promotion.**

Soviet chefs sample hot-rock hospitality

Detente over hot rocks. **Atlas Hotels, Inc., a regional San Diego-based hotel chain, hosted a reception and dinner for visiting Soviet chefs who took part in the Soviet Arts Festival, a three-week festival that featured Soviet art and culture. Here, executive chef Rolf Jung (far right) demonstrates hot-rock cooking, a specialty of the hotel's restaurant, The Gourmet Room.**

Conference for Food Protection announces 1990 meeting

The fifth meeting of the Conference for Food Protection will be held at the Colony Square Hotel in Atlanta, April 21–25, 1990.

The conference provides a forum for debate and discussion of current issues concerning safety in the production, packaging, distribution, sale and serving of food. It promotes the implementation of practices that enhance the quality of the national food supply.

The conference invites interested persons from regulatory agencies, industry and academic institutions to actively contribute to the development and implementation of practical food-safety policies.

For information regarding registration, membership and submitting issues of discussion, contact the Conference for Food Protection, P.O. Box 1468, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106, (313) 769-8010.

Sobik's promotes its steak subs

When Sobik's Subs, a submarine sandwich chain in Orlando, Florida, ran its Project Steak promotion last fall, it featured 13 steak submarine sandwich variations.

"Historically, the steak subs are the most preferred item on our menu. We wanted to take advantage of the seasonal preference for hot items in the fall. Before deciding on Project Steak we tested the items in our corporate stores, and based on the unbelievable response to the sandwiches, we decided to take the promotion company wide," said George Salmons, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Sobik's Franchises Inc.

"The other nice part about Project Steak is that we were able to develop new sandwich varieties using existing ingredients. By doing this we eliminated the typical operational problems presented by adding new ingredients or implementing new procedures," added Salmons.

Elements of the promotion included western-themed graphics, in-store banners, counter cards, buttons, fliers, free-standing inserts, and the purchase of a radio schedule on eight stations.

A business card—rolodex-style

Dear Editor:

Per your article on business cards in the November 1989 issue of ***Restaurants USA,*** enclosed is one of our business cards—rolodex style. Customers love it! We also carry the normal business card size.

I love your magazine!

—Lisa Carbone,
Pinot Ganache,
Vancouver, Washington

No shoes, no shirt, no service—makes no sense

Every time I enter the door of a business that has a sign that blares out "No shoes, no shirt, no service" I bristle, turn and walk out. Whether it is neatly painted or crudely etched with a child's crayon, I find it offensive, belittling and absurd.

"No shoes, no shirt, no service" is an affront not only to the English language, but also to the customer who is the life's blood of every enterprise. I don't know the name of the fool who came up with this ghastly phrase, but I do know that he is one of the carriers of a dreaded disease that closes more businesses down each year than any other single cause—customer neglect.

As a business consultant, I am constantly advising companies about concerns that are important to their income and their profits. There is no issue higher in the awareness of business people than how to keep customers. It costs a company 15 to 20 times more to replace a lost customer than to acquire a new one. But it costs significantly less to keep a present customer happy.

Therefore, it makes very good (dollars and) sense for business people to do nothing that alienates, angers or injures a profitable and amicable business relationship. Any attempt, however common, to improve the conduct of customers, maintain the physical condition of the establishment or impart the policies of the restaurant should be done with customers' reactions in mind.

Anyone who deals with the public long enough discovers that there are customers who are obnoxious. We all know that children from homes where public manners are lacking and adults who have yet to grow up frequently violate common courtesies. But these people are in the crude-and-rude minority.

Regardless, there is a proper way to speak to people who take the time to drive to your business, park their cars and—from their hard-earned money—buy a product or service from you. They could just as easily go to your closest competitor; and if you do not serve them well, they will.

We spend thousands of dollars each year on advertising. We spend thousands more on various forms of promotion. And why? To convince people to buy from us. And then, having invested all this money, we meet them at the door with the warm and friendly greeting—*no shoes, no shirt, no service.* It makes no sense.

There is a more customer-sensitive way to communicate what you are trying to say without provoking anger or confusion: "We would appreciate it very much if all those who enter here are appropriately dressed. Thank you." Or, "Thank you for wearing shoes and a shirt while dining here."

You convey the same message, but you do it in such a fashion as to protect the precious and profitable relationship of the vast majority of your customers.

So take down the signs that offend those who ensure your profits and keep you in business. Good, sincere customer service pays off for everyone.

—Joe Sheridan,
president, J.A. Sheridan, Ltd.,
Barrington, Illinois

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*Readers are invited to comment on industry issues, **Restaurants USA** articles and association activities. Send your opinions to Feedback, **Restaurants USA,** 1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington DC 20036-3097. Submissions may be edited for length.*

New reporting laws outlive Section 89

When Congress passed Section 89 nondiscrimination rules in 1986, lawmakers added new filing requirements for employers who offer benefit plans. And even though Congress repealed Section 89 last November, reporting rules are still in place, and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) plans to impose penalties on nonfilers.

Whom do the rules affect?

Since 1985 employers who offer group legal services, cafeteria-benefit plans and tuition assistance to workers have been required to file annual reports with the IRS about those plans.

In 1986 Congress expanded the requirement to include companies offering group-term life insurance, accident and health insurance, and dependent-care assistance programs. Congress also voted to increase the amount of information each employer must report.

The new reporting requirements take effect for benefit-plan years beginning after December 31, 1988. Reports are generally due no later than seven months after a plan year ends (although IRS permits employers to petition for extensions).

Companies are required to submit data using IRS's Form 5500 series. Many businesses already use this series to file annual reports on pension and profit-sharing plans. And most companies that have more than 100 workers and offer health benefits must fill out parts of the 5500 to meet ERISA requirements.

However, many companies with fewer than 100 employees may not know about Form 5500 or the new reporting requirements. The National Restaurant Association urges all association members who offer benefits to talk to plan providers and accountants about the new laws.

DC ROUNDUP

□ Employers must give certain workers notice of possible tax refund. Within a week of furnishing employees with W-2 forms (Wage and Tax Statements), employers must notify all employees from whom no federal income tax was withheld that they may qualify for a tax refund under the federal government's Earned Income Tax Credit program.

The notice requirement does not apply to employees who claimed an exemption from withholding on their W-4 forms. Employers can meet the notice requirement by giving employees a copy of IRS Notice 797, "You May Be Eligible for a Refund on Your Federal Income Tax Return Because of the Earned Income Credit."

□ IRS releases Form 940-EZ. Employers who want to cut the time they spend filling out their federal unemployment-tax return (IRS Form 940) may be able to file on IRS's new Form 940-EZ.

The form is for employers who contribute to just one state's unemployment insurance program. To get a copy of Form 940-EZ, contact the IRS at 1-800-424-FORM. —*Denise Roach*

New York, New York

How do you spot a trendy restaurant in New York?

It may be tough keeping up with all the hottest new restaurants in New York, but in spotting the telltale signs of dining trendiness, the 4,700 participants in the *1990 Zagat New York City Restaurant Survey* have the act down cold.

When asked to complete the phrase, "You know a restaurant is trendy when . . . ," their responses filled 72 pages of single-spaced descriptions.

"While our contributors love to be in on a trend as much as the next New Yorker—maybe more so—they're also wise to the pretense and artifice that account in some measure for the biggest instant success stories we've seen," says *Survey* co-publisher Tim Zagat.

You know a restaurant is trendy when . . .

Food

A dish of pasta costs $24

They have skate on the menu

They serve warm salads

They serve raspberry sauce on calves' liver

They serve blackened foods you've never heard of

They use words like "melange" to describe the special

They keep reminding you how extra-virgin the olive oil is

They put the sauce *under* the food

Corn comes in different colors

Cajun ice cream is a dessert

They serve food that grows wild in the desert

Dried tomatoes are in everything

They ask what kind of water you drink

You're still hungry when you leave

The food stinks but you can't get a table

Decor

The walls are turquoise or ochre

There's a lot of wood

The chairs are triangular

It's pastel-on-neon yuck!

It hangs an iguana from the ceiling

Pictures of it show up in *Metropolitan Home*

Adam Tihany designed it

It looks like Pee Wee's Playhouse

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Vegetarian food for meat lovers

When is a chicken not a chicken or a duck not a duck? And when are such dishes as "Szechuan pork" free of animal fat and cholesterol? Philadelphia restaurant-goers are discovering the answer to these delicious riddles at Harmony Vegetarian Restaurant, a new Chinese eatery where the menu—and the tastes—are in a class by themselves.

Although Harmony's extensive menu lists items such as beef, chicken, pork and duck, in reality no meat, fish, shellfish, eggs or dairy products are served. Oh, they all look like meat, and they taste like meat, but owner George Tang makes everything from vegetables, mushrooms, seaweed, pure

1990 ZAGAT NEW YORK CITY RESTAURANT SURVEY

Staff/service

It's got its own T-shirt

The waiters look like an Italian soccer team

"I can only seat you at 10:30"

"I can seat you at 6:00, but I need the table by 7:00"

"We don't have anything at all until the first of the year"

Crowd

Everyone's wearing black

The men are over 60, the women under 30

Biff, Buffy and their BMW are there

Everyone is tanned in February

The leather skirts and power stripes have moved in

People look like they have whiplash

People from one table kiss people from another table

Lots of long legs with short black skirts

People watch the door to see who walks in

Even the men are pushing back their hair

Out-of-town clients want to go there

It's in the media

Celebrities go there

—Zagat Survey

vegetable color and wheat gluten—with no MSG, artificial coloring or artificial flavoring.

Before he opened Harmony in August, Tang went to Hong Kong to learn his illusive brand of Hong Kong vegetarian cooking. Gluten, which Tang makes himself by washing the starch out of flour, is the key to his culinary magic. For example, a whole lump of gluten is quickly deep-fried, then sliced and marinated to become "beef." Or golfball-sized bits are deep-fried, then sliced and stir-fried to get the look and texture of a thin slice of chicken hanging onto its skin. Bean-curd skin, a natural byproduct of bean curd, comes "thin and crispy" for duck skin, and a "little more thick and soft" for chicken skin.

Not all the dishes on Harmony's menu involve deception, of course, but they do feature more than a bit of imagination. For example, seaweed and bean-curd soup is full of fresh bean curd and clouds of soft, richly flavored seaweed. Abalone mushroom with vegetables is a heaping serving of these unusual mushrooms, surrounded by mustard greens and steamed tomatoes and topped with a dried mushroom as big as a porcini. And the popular and plump steamed dumplings are colored red with carrot or green with spinach.

Most intriguing, however, has to be the restaurant's frequent special—roast duck. Bean-curd skin, spiced exactly like roast duck, is wrapped around sheets of ground taro and served in pieces like duck breast. The skin is even crispier that the real stuff, and the taro has the texture of real breast meat. With talent like this, you have to wonder what Tang could do to a Philadelphia cheesesteak.

—Philadelphia Inquirer

Great Barrington, Massachusetts

Tasty legal tender

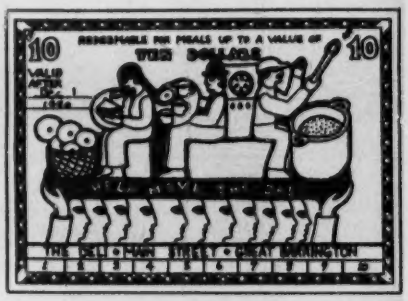
There's a new kind of currency floating around Great Barrington, Massachusetts, and it seems to be the kind that everyone in town can really sink their teeth into.

It's called Deli Dollars, a limited local currency devised last year to help a local restaurateur get money up front to move to a better site. The notes are in the form of $10 certificates that sell for $8 each, or $100 worth for $75—and they are redeemable for deli fare in 1990.

Frank Tortoriello, owner of The Deli, created the Deli Dollars with the help of Share, a nonprofit lending program that helps in the start-up of regional businesses. The notes are staggered in their validity dates, with more becoming usable during the busier summer months at this Berkshire Hills vacation town.

The enthusiastic response of the community, however, has made the Deli Dollars more than just sandwich certificates. For example, Ron White, a local record-store owner, is accepting the notes at face value toward purchases in his store. And one of the certificates even turned up in the collection plate at the First Congregational Church, where the Reverend Charles VanAusdall proclaimed it "a wonderful new capitalist experiment."

The Deli Dollars went on sale at the end of October. By December, Tortoriello had sold more than $3,000 worth of the bagel bucks—three-quarters of the total he planned to issue. One of the keys to the success of the new currency, says Susan Witt, administrator for Share, is that Great Barrington is a tightknit rural community "in which people are committed to doing things for themselves. The perception is when you help one, you help all." Tortoriello, she adds, is

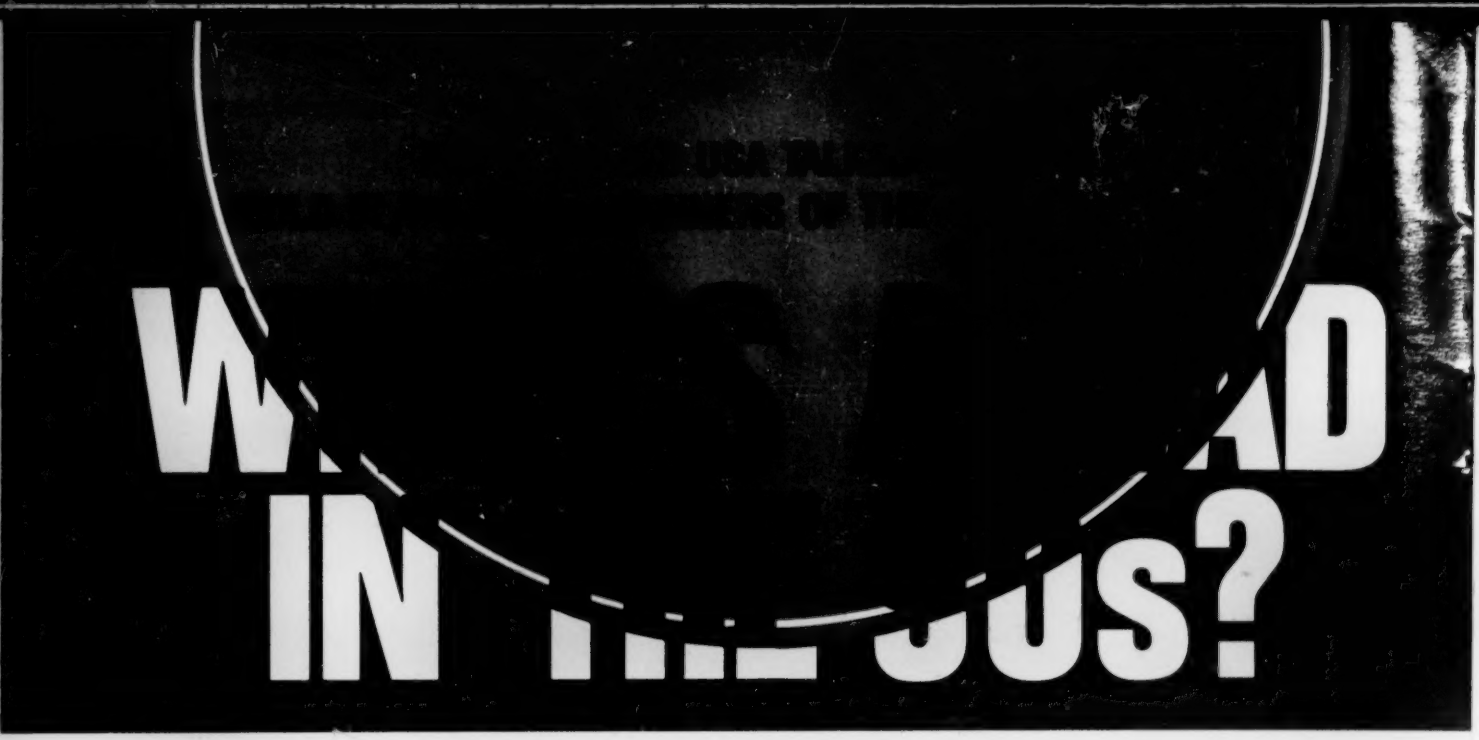


known for his community service, such as "quietly providing free meals to those who need them."

The winning design of the burgundy-and-cream notes also is an important factor in their popularity, says Witt, because "people enjoy having them and giving them as presents." But for all the fun and good publicity, she adds, the notes must be considered serious business. "It's basically issuing yourself a loan, and it's important you don't issue yourself more than you can pay. Frank carefully looked at how much he could handle over the next year."

What's next? In the summer of 1990, Share is planning to issue another local currency, "Greensback," to local farmers who grow their own food. "Maybe," says Witt, "restaurants who buy from these farms could accept Greensback for meals."

—David Slater



W[illegible]AD IN [illegible]OUS?

A new decade is now upon us, bringing challenges and opportunities to the foodservice industry. Previewing the 1990s are the Gold Plate award winners of the last 10 years. The International Foodservice Management Association (IFMA) honors one individual every year for his or her pioneering style in the foodservice industry, by awarding the prestigious Gold Plate award. Here's what these innovators see coming in the next decade.

by Alexis Harrison

Service—first and foremost

The Gold Plate award winners of the 1980s agree that attentive service will be an important component of success in the 1990s. "We're gearing ourselves for the service industry, not just the restaurant industry," says 1980 Gold Plate award winner John Teets, chairman, president and CEO of Greyhound Food Management Inc. in Phoenix. "This means better service and better quality."

Restaurateur, consultant and 1987 Gold Plate award winner Joseph Baum points out that "attention to details is a must. The precocity of restaurants is tiresome and unfortunate. Customers go to restaurants to be together and enjoy themselves. People want a good time—so caring and interest are what's important."

Walter Conti, owner of Conti Cross Keys Inn in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, has also observed that in the '90s the industry will flourish if restaurateurs "meet the perception of the guest. We've got to make each person feel special, like he or she is one of the family. This means service with a smile—not silliness, not familiarity, but professionalism, which includes taking care of small details."

Much of this concern for intensive, high-quality service stems from what many in the foodservice industry see as the saturation of the restaurant market. Because of the multitude of restaurants, more establishments will be competing for the same customers.

Return to basic food continues

In addition to more attentive service, the 1990s will highlight fresh, nutritious, simply prepared foods. "Food got 'lighter' in the '80s—lighter sauces and dressings," observes Richard Melman, last year's winner of the Gold Plate award and president of Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises, Inc. in Chicago.

Conti says that the biggest trend in the 1980s was the return to "American basic foods," and that this trend is sure to continue into the 1990s. "Give customers a nice piece of meat or a good piece of fish and keep it simple and nutritious," he suggests.

He says that modern transportation has opened up new markets and a better availability of fresh foods, but he suggests that making a big deal out of freshness might not be good practice. "If a restaurateur starts proclaiming how fresh his food is, customers will wonder, 'What did he serve before?' " comments Conti.

"Menus are always changing," Baum adds. "Restaurants should take advantage of the new markets with fresh produce and high-quality, exotic goods. People remember products, and they want to remember dishes. Keep it basic—but not dull."

Dayton Public Schools Foodservice Supervisor Elizabeth Bender, 1985 Gold Plate award winner, has noticed that "more people were eating out in the '80s, and they became more conscious of nutrition." Bender says she sees technology aiding improved nutrition in the 1990s. "Computer analysis of meals will help us reduce sugar, salts and fats and increase fiber."

Jacques Bloch, director of food services at Montefiore Medical Center in New York and winner of the 1982 Gold Plate award, foresees an important role for the new nutritional in-

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Alexis Harrison is an intern at ***Restaurants USA.***

formation in health care. "Hospital chefs of the future will be nutritionally more knowledgeable, and hospitals will have more nutritionally correct meals based on results of recent scientific findings. And we will continue to deal with increasingly knowledgeable patients," says Bloch.

Exciting changes in decor

Exciting changes in decor are also expected. "There will be a lot of diversity in restaurant design," says Melman. "Some decors will be old-fashioned or 'clubby,' and others will be modern. There will always be people who like vanilla, and others who like butter pecan." Restaurant decors usually go through five to 10-year cycles, says Conti, but he sees that changing. "I think places will be built that will last for more than five years. We'll continue to move away from coatrooms and side-by-side seating. Gone are the days when you always put a lady in the best seat."

Ted Balestreri, 1984 recipient of the Gold Plate Award and co-owner of The Sardine Factory in Monterey, California, sees two main styles coming. "The first is very avant garde, with some exciting changes. At the same time, there will be more nostalgic decors. As things become newer, faster and more technical, people cling tighter to the past."

Even schools and health institutions are planning on redecorating. Bloch sees boutique-style service and self-service at hospitals that can afford it, and Bender says more and more schools will renovate their cafeterias to make them a more pleasant place—school budgets permitting.

Overall, the move is toward a more casual atmosphere. Melman says he likes to be able "to eat high-quality food in jeans," and thinks his customers do as well.

Baum calls this development "casual elegance." Balestreri agrees that "baroque-type restaurants will have a harder time with acceptability, although I appreciate them. Most people are too impatient for grand dining."

Conti, on the other hand, hesitates to dismiss the popularity of formal dining, although he did open a second, less expensive restaurant last year. "On Saturday nights, customers are dressing up," he notes. "But restaurants are becoming more casual in the sense that customers will no longer go to a place where the employees look down their noses at them."

Teets strongly disagrees with the view that casual is "in." "Casual is being overdone," he asserts. "People want to dress, want to look nice. A restaurant will be successful if it provides a formal environment."

Bleak government outlook

Aside from internal issues, these foodservice leaders are concerned about government interference in the foodservice business. Balestreri has been very active in the legislative process, and he believes restaurateurs have to keep a constant vigil on our lawmakers. "Keep the government out of our kitchen" is an old saying Balestreri believes in. He says one of the first political crises of the 1990s will be the FICA law, which taxes tips. "This is paramount to discouraging fine dining," Balestreri says.

Conti also feels strongly about getting involved in the political process. "We have not represented our side of the industry very well. I don't think we're able to articulate our positives to Congress. Our image is hurting, and it hurts our business," Conti says. He cites the Americans with Disabilities Act as an example of the sensitive issues that will be important to the foodservice industry in the 1990s.

"One of our biggest threats is Congress," warns Teets. "They have the ability to make laws that don't make sense. We have to remain vigilant."

New management style

With all the changes coming in the 1990s, the Gold Plate winners recommend that restaurateurs change their management styles accordingly.

"The 1980s was the period of input groups and communication," says Balestreri. "Leadership is the key for the 1990s—not only in restaurants, but also in our country as a whole. Our country needs strong leaders."

Teets practices what he calls participative management, a concept similar to bottom-up management. "This idea has been around for 20 years, but it's not practiced enough. We need to practice what we preach," Teets says. Bender plans to use "all-encompassing management to deal with all the new problems we'll face."

Although Melman doesn't put a name to his management technique, he says management is a fascinating part of the industry. "One of the interesting things about a restaurant is that you don't just build it and then let it sit there until the lease runs out. It's constantly changing, so management needs to be changing, too, and updating its management style."

Personal plans are prudent

As far as his company is concerned, Melman says he is just concerned with being the best he can be—the best independent operator. "I take each next step one at a time," says Melman. Although widely known as an innovative restaurant entrepreneur, Melman insists he doesn't have a special method of developing new restaurant ideas. "I don't sit down and think, 'What's going to be the next trend?' I just do what I think is good, and stay in touch with the customers. I talk to people and give them what they want," explains Melman.

Balestreri has also adopted a prudent pace. "I plan to get into one new concept at a time and finance multiples of that one, instead of getting into many ideas at once. We must also own the property before investing in a fine-dining restaurant. The value of owning the real estate is a hidden profit."

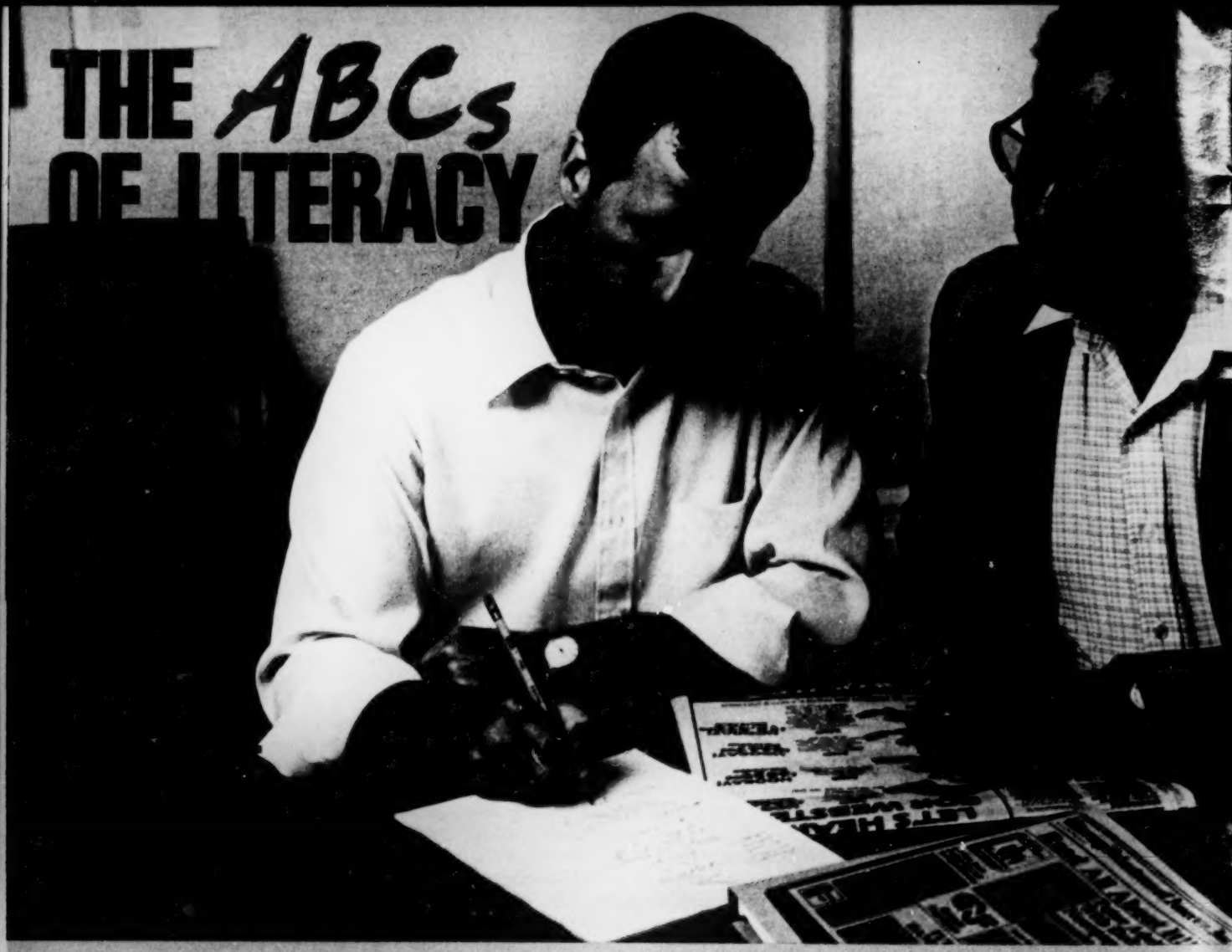
Reevaluating old values and adding new nuances for success is what Conti Cross Keys plans to do in the 1990s. Says Conti, "We'll be concentrating on menu, service, management and beverage responsibilities."

Baum's direction for the 1990s is straightforward. "We're headed right to the dinner table, where we'll continue to try to please the customer."

To survive the '90s

Now is the time to start looking ahead, all these leaders say, making changes and improvements to prosper in an exciting new decade. ❑

THE ABCs OF LITERACY



Despite a keen sense of public urgency to solve our nation's social problems—from drugs and homelessness to solid waste—there is a feeling of optimism and hope for the future. Volunteerism and old-fashioned values are experiencing a resurgence. Those who spent the 1980s accumulating wealth and status are starting to look for ways to give back to society. Just as the 1980s will be remembered as a decade of toppling international barriers, the 1990s could well be the decade for national introspection.

It is not just individuals reaching out to help others. The business world is looking to get involved, too, and restaurateurs—with a strong history of community involvement—can step forward as leaders in their communities. What roles do restaurateurs play in their communities and what can restaurateurs do to help solve society's problems? These are the questions ***Restaurants USA*** *hopes to address in its "Restaurants and the Community" serie*

This first article in the se ries looks at literacy in th workplace. For a country of its size and international prestige, the United States has a staggering il literacy problem. Approxi mately 4 percent of Amer can adults cannot read o write—and this figure masks the 20 percent of functionally illiterate

photo courtesy of Literacy Volunteers of America

adults who can read enough "to get by." How can America possibly stay competitive in the world's marketplace when it cannot even depend on its workforce being able to read a job application form—never mind a complicated computer manual?

Literacy programs are one way that restaurateurs are proving they care about their communities and are committed to making a difference.

As recently as 10 years ago literacy aid was a matter of "doing good"—but no more: Today it's a matter of economic survival. "Every hotel and restaurant in this country has a literacy problem, whether it knows it or not," says Bessie Lee, executive director of the Greenville Literacy Association in Greenville, South Carolina.

William J. Bennett, former Secretary of Education and now the nation's "drug czar," reported that as a nation, "We are still perilously far from closing the gaps between what we need in the workplace and what our schools are turning out."

According to the Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL), located in New York City, profound changes in the structure of the workplace now make literacy skills more important than ever before, and the need for these skills will grow in the years ahead. And yet an alarming percentage of adult literacy students who have a high school diploma cannot effectively read or write.

Yusuf Kassam, director of programs for the International Council for Adult Education in Toronto, Canada, estimates that "20 percent of American adults are functionally illiterate; and of that 20 percent, perhaps a quarter to half are totally illiterate."

"Functional illiteracy holds back all employees in terms of lost productivity, advancement opportunities and, ultimately, a company's profits," says Paul Jurmo, senior program associate of BCEL.

So what can a foodservice employer do? Because 1990 has been designated by the United Nations as the International Literacy Year, it is a good time to join the effort to combat the global problem of illiteracy by starting out in your own backyard—or kitchen, as the case may be.

"Tenfold returns"

About three years ago, Patti Sussman, director of personnel at the Mariner's Inn in Hilton Head, South Carolina, suspected a widespread literacy problem among employees. She sensed that "The quality of our applicants was just not what we were looking for—not because they weren't bright, but because of missed opportunities. Many could not read recipes or job descriptions."

Sussman posted a sign announcing free literacy tutoring at the Inn—on company time—by volunteers from the nearby Beaufort Literacy Council. The response was dismal. Sussman tried another tack; she changed the name of the program from "The Literacy Program" to "Career Development." Sussman reports, "A lot of people did sign up, but I knew there were more out there."

"Then I decided to put a note about the program in the paycheck envelopes," recalls Sussman. "The next thing I knew, all these people thought they had been terminated. Without really thinking, I had printed the notes on pink paper. It really showed the need for the program, but in an ironic and painful way. A lot of these people had a high school education, too, but they couldn't even read their diplomas."

Sussman says she decided the problem was important enough to bring in tutors a few hours each week to work on basic math, reading, writing and grammar skills. All types of employees have participated—from waitresses to supervisors. And because the tutoring is open-ended, employees can stay with the program as long as they feel they need help. The program costs the inn $4,200 per year in time spent not working, but says Sussman, "the time we allow for this program has been returned to us tenfold in increased productivity."

One unexpected benefit of the program is the notable growth of employees' personal independence: "I see a real improvement in personal pride. For the first time in their lives, a lot of these people are able to understand employee-insurance policies, use a checking account, get a driver's license or simply read to their children."

Although the program is still called "Career Development," the stigma initially attached to the literacy program at the Mariner's Inn has now become positive word-of-mouth advertising.

Joan Herlong is a freelance writer in Greenville, South Carolina.

"Now," beams Sussman, "applicants often says 'If I get the job, I'd like to sign up for the Career Development program, too.' "

How to spot illiteracy

Bessie Lee says there are many clues for detecting employees who cannot read well. "These are not stupid people, but they feel a lot of shame about it," Lee advises. "You can often tell at the application stage by such comments as, 'May I bring this application back tomorrow?' 'Could you clarify these directions?' and 'I forgot my glasses, I'll have to bring this back later.' These are all common ways they get around reading."

It also happens that a good employee who does one job well may actually quit when offered a promotion rather than have to admit that he or she cannot read well enough to do the new job. According to Lee, the illiterate often rely on a keen memory or symbols to get along, and they become so adept at doing so that they are hard to detect. Restaurants in particular have so much routine and repetition built into the system that illiter-

Literacy one step further

While many literacy programs focus on adults who "fell through the cracks" in schools, several foodservice operators are taking a more future-oriented approach and targeting today's youth. Among them are Burger King Corporation and Pizza Hut.

Helping at-risk teens

As part of its overall "Education Enriches Everyone Program," Burger King, in partnership with Cities in Schools (CIS), Inc., and the U.S. Department of Justice, has established "Burger King Academy" in 10 cities across the United States in the fall of 1989 and through this spring. CIS is the largest national dropout prevention organization and a public/private partnership.

As the major private partner, Burger King provides funding, jobs for academy students and communications support for the Burger King Academy. Local school boards and community social services represent the public contribution to the schools.

The fully accredited high schools are geared to serve the needs of "at-risk" high school students who face problems with pregnancy, substance abuse or crime, as well as teenagers who have already dropped out of school. The goal of the Burger King Academy is to use a nurturing, personalized approach to get these troubled students back into the mainstream as contributing members of society.

Barry Gibbons, chief executive officer for Burger King, points out that "One million kids drop out of school each year. This not only takes a toll on human lives, but also costs this country billions of dollars each year in lost tax revenue, welfare, unemployment and crime prevention. It also costs American businesses a combined $25 billion a year to train people to read, write and count."

At each Burger King Academy, about 125 students receive individualized instruction in such "basics" as math, reading, writing and verbal communication. In addition, the schools' curriculum includes employment and job skills, training and career placement opportunities. Unlike most other public or private high schools, Burger King Academy provides social services such as health care and personal/family counseling.

Burger King Academy students also get on-the-job training through internships offered by local businesses, including Burger King franchises.

Feeding an interest in reading

Many educators believe that a love of reading is best fostered in young children. Pizza Hut is among those corporations that have focused their literacy initiatives on elementary school children. Five years ago then-president Arthur Gunther, appalled at the low literacy level of job applicants, decided to do something to motivate kids to read more. And so the company began its "Book It!" program.

Book It! is a five-month program, begun each October, for grades one through six. All materials are sent to any classroom or school from Pizza Hut free of charge. The teacher sets monthly reading goals for each child in the class; this way children develop at their own pace, rather than competing against others in the class. As a child's monthly reading goal is met, he or she earns a "Free Pizza Award Certificate," redeemable at a participating Pizza Hut restaurant. There is no purchase required.

Pizza Hut managers are trained to recognize the Free Pizza Award as a very special achievement. In addition to the free personal pan pizza, the manager awards the child a button with a star on it. "The recognition the child receives for meeting his reading goal is at least as important as the free

acy can and does exist in positions from the chief cook to bottle washer.

It takes courage to come forward

Marty Finsterbusch, cook at Villanova College in Villanova, Pennsylvania, is a case in point. Finsterbusch is good at what he does, but until recently, he could not aspire to a position with more responsibility. Finsterbusch had completed high school, but before he sought literacy help, he read at about a fifth-grade level.

Students at the Philadelphia Burger King Academy receive personalized instruction in a nurturing environment. Philadelphia is one of 10 Burger King Academies supported by a public/private partnership, including Burger King, Cities in Schools and the U.S. Department of Justice.

pizza," says Eunice Ellis, director of the Book It! program.

If a child completes all five months of the program, he or she receives a special Book It! honor award given by the school principal. The program has been so well received that many schools incorporate the Book It! honor awards into the regular honor awards ceremonies. In the event that all the children in a class complete any four months of the five-month program, the class and teacher enjoy a free pizza party at the Pizza Hut restaurant.

Book It! has grown from 230,000 classrooms in 1985 to well over half a million in 1989, plus some 7,000 in Canada. According to Ellis, "The feedback has been tremendous and positive. Pizza Hut plans to continue the program indefinitely. Our current president Steve Reinemund is very committed to it, and we try to develop a new incentive each year to keep it interesting. This year, we're sponsoring a 'Best Book I Ever Read' poster contest. A winning poster from each grade will be selected, plus a grand-prize winner."

Ellis adds that although Pizza Hut has put its emphasis on children, it also takes advantage of opportunities to support other literacy programs, which include helping other businesses become involved in reading and education programs. Ellis urges interested businesses to call her at 1-800-4-BOOK IT or write to Book It!, P.O. Box 2999, Wichita, KS 67201.

"I learned by listening, learning and watching—by doing," says Finsterbusch. "There are lots of ways to get around not reading, lots of little tricks to help you along.

"I have brains," he declares. "I lacked a skill, that's all. At the advice of a former teacher, I went to the local literacy council. I would never have done it myself, because of the stigma attached."

Finsterbusch is glad he "went public" about his reading difficulty—but, unfortunately, he had to pay a price. "I got banged around a lot at work," he recalls. "Nobody openly admits it. My good raises stopped, and I lost my position for a while. But I stuck with it. Eventually the raises started again, and I got my position back. Now a lot of other people where I work are either attending a literacy program or helping out as tutors."

Finsterbusch feels very strongly about the benefits to be gained from helping illiterate employees. "If you help someone achieve the added skills of learning to read, you'll have an even better employee. I also feel strongly that an employer should not use a 'witch hunt' or some kind of a test to root out those who can't read and then force them into a literacy center. You cannot force someone to learn. But you've got to make it available for someone who wants to learn. Make it visible, be supportive."

A "grasp" on opportunity

That's just what restaurateur Jose Venzor has done in his three Carmen's Pizzeria restaurants in Chicago and Evanston, Illinois. Venzor has a personal interest in helping any of his 200 employees learn basic literacy skills and English. "I came to this country when I was 18," Venzor recalls, "and I entered the University of Illinois without knowing any English. I know how tough it can be. I want to give these guys a break."

The "break" Venzor refers to is the on-site literacy program. Developed by GRASP, Inc., a nonprofit literacy center in Evanston, the on-site program at Carmen's Pizzeria has run on and off for the past six years with tremendous success.

To date, about 150 employees, mostly busboys and kitchen personnel, have voluntarily attended classes, which meet in groups of 12 twice a week for a total of four hours. Almost all of the students started out with limited or no English language ability. Some were also illiterate in their own language, Spanish. Since taking the course, several employees have been promoted to managers, and others have gone on to such diverse careers as medicine and engineering.

As literacy educators have observed, such changes are common. "We see people, particularly women, change before our very eyes when they start really reading. The difference is just unbelievable. They take pride in themselves. One student recently said, 'I now believe in myself!' They become completely different human beings," says Bessie Lee.

Deciding to sponsor the program on company time was easy for Venzor. "There is some down time between lunch and dinner in this business. I was paying people to be there, anyway, and I thought we could use that time more productively." Venzor explains.

Mavis Whitaker of GRASP, Inc. handles the program that she personally developed for Carmen's Pizzerias. "We use a workplace-based curriculum, nothing 'canned,' but material that will benefit them right away," says Whitaker. "We help them do their jobs better, as well as learning to read and write better. For example, when Carmen's developed a new menu, we incorporated it into the class so the students could learn all the new sauces and pastas right away."

The fact that the learning is relevant and not rote, and that the learning context is more social, removes many of the barriers found in schools. "The single most important thing in teaching anything effectively is to build on something the students are already interested in," Whitaker emphasizes.

How well the approach works is evident by the fact that there is currently no class going on at any of the Carmen's Pizzerias. This is not because Venzor's support has changed, but rather the last group "graduated" to local community colleges or other educational centers. ❑

PARTNERSHIPS
HOW TO MAKE THEM WORK

Good partnerships, like good marriages, are made in heaven. So say those who make them work every day. It isn't easy to share the responsibility of running a restaurant. Yet, a good number of restaurants are run by some form of partnership.

by Kathy Boyle

In the same way that marriage counselors describe successful marriages, partners will tell you it takes devotion, respect and the ability to listen to a fellow partner to make a success. Early financial success does not hurt, either. Those who make a partnership work point to the advantages—the luxury of being able to take a vacation, to forget the operation on occasion, to be sick, to attend a meeting and to expand into new ventures without neglecting the existing business.

Kathy Boyle is a freelance writer in Rockville, Maryland.

Start with a dream, add chemistry

The key ingredients that can smooth over even the roughest of times in a partnership are a shared dream and a good personality match. The glue that still holds together the mother-daughter duo of Sandra Philbrick and Christine Sarcione, owners of the 300-seat Pond View Restaurant in Kingston, New Hampshire, is the determination to make their dream come true. They both saw beyond the tiny one-room hamburger joint sitting on the edge of a pond. Since Sarcione and her mother bought the original Chuck Wagon restaurant 12 years ago, they have worked hard to bring their dream to reality. "We started putting up Colonial wallpaper, changing the menu and adding new china and crystal." Today, the restaurant has taken shape in the way they planned together. There are seven dining rooms, five of which face the pond, and each has its own distinctive decor—each table in the restaurant is unique, with its own color of linens, china and crystal settings.

Besides a shared vision, partners' personalities should mesh as well. Ted J. Balestreri, longtime partner with Bert Cutino in their 220-seat restaurant, The Sardine Factory in Mon-

Partnerships can take many different forms. At the far left, The Shore Bird restaurant partners, Nick Dunn, Bill Main, Bill Gillespie and Rob Buckley, are a "team of specialists." In the center, Routh Street Cafe owners, John Dayton and Stephan Pyles, share an office to maintain close communication. At right, Ted Balestreri and Bert Cutino of The Sardine Factory claim their partnership's success is based on good chemistry.

terey, California, and now in nine other restaurants as well, contends that compatibility is the single most important element. "Chemistry is more important than talent. You have to like each other and be able to get along. If the chemistry is not right, you cannot survive," he says.

Similar backgrounds can make for a harmonious match. A connection is obvious when family members go into partnership, but similarities can grow out of an educational experience (Cutino and Balestreri were college roommates) or a shared work background. The team of Salameh and Michel Nazzal of the 135-seat restaurant Anton and Michel in Carmel, California, combines many of these elements. The two are cousins who were raised together in the Middle East and then studied together at the Hotel School in Lausanne, Switzerland. "After hotel school I went to the United States and worked for the five-star Quail Lodge resort in Camel Valley, California, and Michel went back home and worked in his family's hotels," recalls Salameh Nazzal.

However, the two never stopped planning for the dream they shared of opening a restaurant together. In May 1980 they made their dream a reality and opened Anton and Michel.

Divide up the work and work hard

It takes more than a clear vision and proper chemistry to make a partnership work. In the 15 years they've been together, the four partners of The Shore Bird restaurant in Princeton-by-the-Sea, California—Bill Gillespie, Bill Main, Rob Buckley and Nick Dunn—have learned a lot about making their partnership work. "I think one of the keys that makes it work for us is that every one of us has been the general manager of the restaurant at one time. Each of us knows every aspect of the operation, and everyone has been in the trenches," says Bill Gillespie.

Over the years, however, each of The Shore Bird partners has had an opportunity to grow toward the part of the operation that interests him the most. "Over the years, responsibilities have evolved towards each of our natural skills and interests," explains Gillespie. "For example, Nick takes care of the bar, front of the house, and mechanical things. Rob's main area is the kitchen and menu development. Bill takes care of the financial, legal and investment aspects—getting us loans and keeping good relations with the bank. And I manage banquets, public relations, advertising and marketing. Plus, since I like the aesthetics part of the restaurant, I take care of seasonal decor and the gardens.

"I think what is important is that we all know what each of us does. We all overlap with one another," Gillespie continues. "Although we have evolved into specialists, we respect each other's experience and capabilities. And if we need to, we can fill in for each other. For 90 percent of the time, we do our own thing; and then for 10 percent of the time, we help the others. It may be a subtle thing, but 'our business' versus 'my business' is an important matter."

Brothers W.K. Franke and Chris Franke, owners of cafeterias in Little Rock, Arkansas, divide their workload by location. Each brother runs his own restaurant yet each shares in all the work of the company. W.K. Franke believes this attitude of being less self-centered and more partnership-centered is an important aspect

in making a partnership work. "Although I am nine years older than Chris, and my title is president and his is vice president, I am not Chris's superior," says W.K. Franke. "Each of us has an area of expertise. Mine is financial and administrative. Chris's is advertising and buying," W.K. Franke explains. "No matter what our expertise or job title is, each of us does what needs to get done."

Easing the workload

The early years of a partnership can be grueling: The hours are long and there is always plenty to do. The hard work seems to bond partners together. Balestreri fondly remembers, "The struggling made us close in the early days. Back then, I would work a shift in my tuxedo and then go out and plant the garden. Or for a break, the two of us would get down under the sink and fix it."

Such a pace can eventually sour a partnership, however. To prevent such mishaps, a number of partners have learned to step back, adding managers so they can have some time off and keep an eye on the big picture.

Philbrick and Sarcione contend that adding capable managers has made all the difference in keeping the partnership running smoothly. "At first we both worked all the jobs—but the front of the house makes my mom more nervous. I have more patience for the front of the house, so now we are both where we are the happiest. My mother now works every day from nine to five keeping the books and doing the ordering. I am here every night. In the early years we both worked all day and all night. But today I have excellent management help," says Sarcione.

Although the formula has changed for the team of Balestreri and Cutino—Balestreri takes care of the front of the house, management and accounting, and Cutino takes care of the kitchen—"as things have evolved over the years, we manage people, rather than places," reports Balestreri. "We are fortunate that from the beginning we were smart enough to hire good people."

John W. Dayton and Stephan W. Pyles, owners of Routh Street Investments in Dallas, have similarly shifted their focus. "At first when we just had the Routh Street Cafe, Stephan did the menu and the kitchen and I ran the front of the house, the service staff, the wine program and business operations. Today it is pretty much the same, but with four restaurants we are less involved in a particular cafe and spend our time overseeing operations in all four restaurants. For example, instead of running one kitchen, Stephan develops food concepts and menus at all four restaurants," says Dayton.

Sharing a dream is the beginning of any partnership. Certainly a little early financial success breeds respect for fellow partners. Compatible personalities help make it stick together. And hard work makes it endure the test of time.

A business plan prevents squabbles

Dividing the money is the next essential matter. And where money is involved, there is the potential for disaster. "Do not confuse friendship with business," says Gillespie of The Shore Bird. "Even if you start as a couple of good buddies with a dream, remember that you do not start a business on friendship. It is best to have a business structure—a legal document in writing—with defined responsibilities for each partner, defined compensation and explicit areas of accountability."

"Things change over the years," he continues. "More money is involved. Partners have girlfriends, get married and have children. What might have started as young single guys helping each other with the rent is now a big business. Without a solid business plan, things will crumble." Although any percentage can be agreed upon for sharing the profits, many partners are adamant about sharing equally. "We share equally in everything, and we have since day one," says Balestreri.

Handling delicate situations, delicately

With a written partnership agreement certain problems can be handled smoothly, such as sale of one partner's share. For example, when the husband/wife team of R. Kerry Mitchell and Deborah Seguin—owners of Freestone's, an 86-seat restaurant in New Bedford, Massachusetts—first started in business, they had a three-way partnership, which included their friend Michael Galsuza. At that time the partnership was split three ways—25 percent went to Mitchell, 25 percent went to Seguin and 50 percent went to Galsuza. By their third year in business, when their operation was up and running, the partners started getting offers to do other restaurants. "All three of us looked at the offers together, but one was just too good for Michael to pass up, so Debbie and I bought him out," recalls Mitchell.

A written agreement can also lay out clear ground rules in day-to-day operational matters. For example, Gillespie and his partners, like many other partnerships, have faced the difficult question of hiring girlfriends, wives and children in the business. This is something that can tear apart even the best of partnerships. "If you have legal agreements ahead of time,

then there are fewer problems," thinks Gillespie.

Balestreri agrees. "We do not want to put ourselves in the position of conflict, and we avoid minefields. We do not hire relatives because it could possibly add friction."

However, if the partnership does experiment with hiring relatives, it is best to get all the partners' prior consent. "Hiring relatives is something you have to handle with discretion and common sense," says Gillespie. "If it does not work, you have to end it. It is a matter of business survival. Even though common sense told us otherwise, we have experimented with family workers over the years. Our experience is that it is not a good idea. However, with the kids it is a little different. It is a little easier to treat them like other employees. Each partner can tell his child: 'It is not my operation; it is our operation. You are working for my partner. It is my partner's business, too.' "

Open communication tempered with diplomacy

Open and frequent communication between partners is essential for long-term success, but it should be tempered with a sense of diplomacy. In the modern-day era of assertiveness training, individuals often forget there is a person with feelings on the other end. "Just like in a marriage, you must have sensitivity to each other's feelings. We try to think before we say something," says Gillespie. Partners note that this is not an inborn skill but one that must be learned.

Communications between partners are usually frequent—often daily. Despite separate locations, the Franke brothers keep in constant contact, either seeing each other every day or talking by phone. Dayton of Routh Street Investments notes the high priority he and Pyles place on daily communication: "We have shared an office since our first day in business. Our desks are no more than five feet from each other. Even when we moved our offices across the street last year and we had the option of moving to separate offices, we chose to keep ourselves side-by-side in the same office."

Successful partners tend to put a premium on the other partner's opinion. "Even though we have a division of responsibilities, Stephan never makes a menu without dropping it on my desk for comments, and when I do interviews, Stephan is sitting right there. I might add that it is not always the most efficient method, but it is one we won't change," say Dayton.

Trust between partners

Early financial success provides the bonding in a partnership by building esteem and trust for the fellow partner. Dayton recalls, "I think our early success helped us. We gained confidence in each other. We knew that we must be doing something right."

The advantages of trust in a partnership are immense. "Partnerships can be tough," admits Salameh. "But when you have 100 percent trust in your partner, you have no hesitation to leave everything in your partner's hands. For example, when Michel has to go back to the Middle East to run some of his family's business, he can leave everything in my hands. And when I want to take two or three months off and go to Europe with my family, as I have in the past, I can do it. There is no doubt my partner will spend the time it takes with the business."

Nurturing each other's professional development

Partnerships that endure the test of time seem to be those where each partner nurtures the other's personal and professional development. Such development can lead partners into new lines of business or it can lead them to leadership roles within the industry.

Balestreri points out that his partnership's growth into other restaurant concepts and other lines of business had its positive effect. "If we only had one restaurant, it might have been hard for one of us to blossom. Although it is very time-consuming to have other restaurants, it gives a good opportunity for the personal growth of all the partners," he says.

Salameh and Michel Nazzal took a long-time planning and researching the location and cuisine for their second restaurant, Tony's American Bar and Grill, a 215-seat establishment in nearby Monterey. The project added to their financial success and contributed to their professional growth.

It also helps to maintain balance in a partnership if both partners receive recognition. "Over the years both of us have received a certain amount of industry recognition. If we both had not been moving ahead, it might have been difficult," says Balestreri. "Although I served as president of the National Restaurant Association, Bert has received recognition as well—as regional vice president of the American Culinary Federation."

In sum

Sharing a dream is the beginning of any partnership. Certainly a little early financial success breeds respect for fellow partners. Compatible personalities help make it stick together. And hard work makes it endure the test of time.

Although there are no guaranteed formulas for success, recognizing what the other person does best and letting him do it unhampered certainly helps to make for a happy partnership. Finally, keeping everything in writing forestalls friction. ❑

Avoiding problems in a partnership

- ☐ Do not go into it strictly for money.
- ☐ Do not choose a partner solely on the basis of talent.
- ☐ Do not hire relatives.
- ☐ Develop a formal, legal business plan.
- ☐ Listen to your partner's opinion.
- ☐ Share the workload, and as success sets in, lighten the workload by adding competent management.
- ☐ Do not go into a partnership if your vision is so strong that it is uncompromising. If you cannot yield occasionally to another partner's suggestion or tolerate things done other than your own way, you are better suited to a sole proprietorship.
- ☐ Recognize that 90 percent of the problems come from incompatibility of partners' spouses and families.
- ☐ Look at and plan new business ventures together.
- ☐ Over the years, try to achieve professional growth simultaneously.

On-site childcare and frequent-diner bonus plans are among the features 7,100 frequent diners in New York and Los Angeles—participants in *1990 Zagat Surveys* for the two cities—said they would like to see in restaurants.

"Our participants, who have never been shy about voicing their gripes, really applied themselves this year with some inventive ideas on how to combat a number of age-old problems—inattentive service, noise, high prices and no-credit-card policies, even drunkenness and reservation problems. There may be a goldmine waiting here for the venturesome restaurateur willing to give some of these suggestions a try," says *Survey* co-publisher Tim Zagat.

Special services

Max Karl Winkler

Call buttons on tables to summon waiters

On-premises child care and babysitting

Adults-only rooms, family rooms and rooms for romance

Group tables for singles

Car services to and from restaurants (New York)

Computerized menus—no more "Hi, my name is . . . "

Kinder, gentler maitre d's

Open-kitchen tours for diners

Restaurant gift certificates

Temporary vestibules in winter (New York)

Portable phones, faxes for table use—real working lunch!

Hot hand and face towels before/after meal

24-hour dining

Drive-through dining pickup for cabbies (New York)

Money matters

Restaurant credit cards—"send my bill home"

Discounts for using cash, like at gas stations

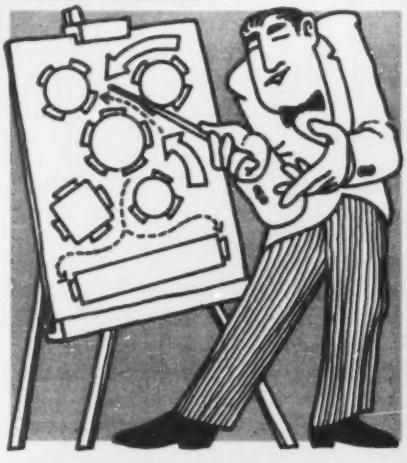
Frequent-diner bonus plans—earn free meals!

On-site ATM machines at no-credit-card joints

Special sale weeks, like department stores

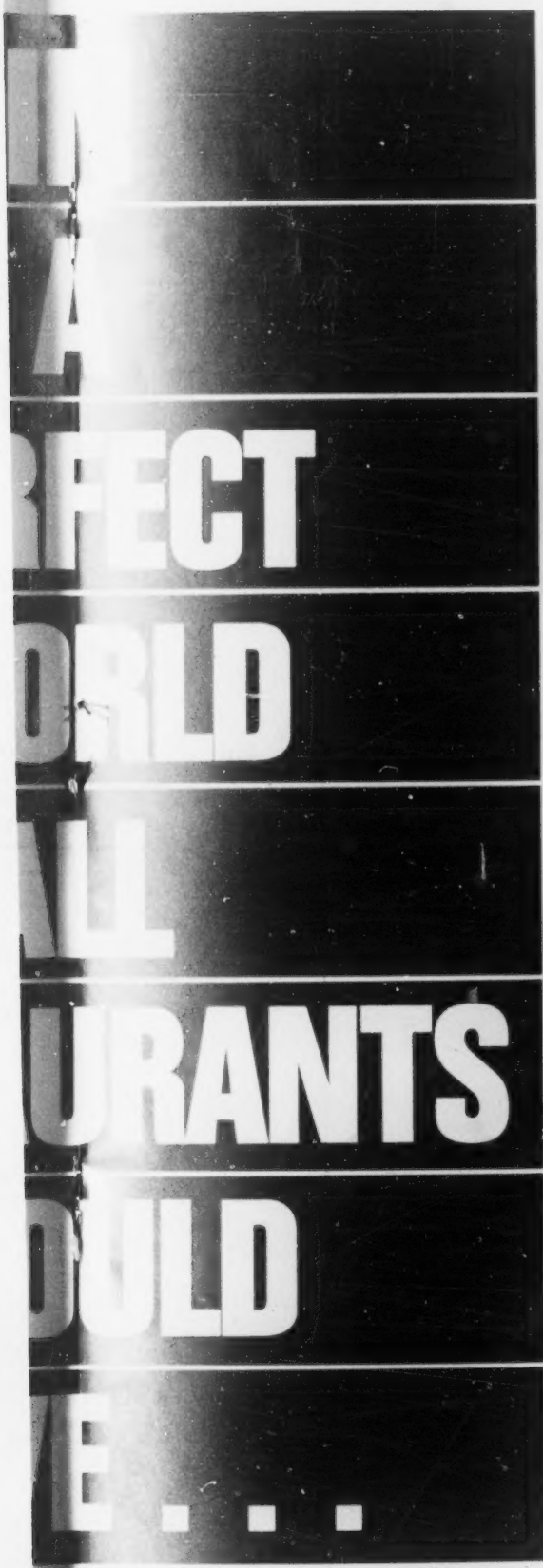
Money-back refunds for certain infractions—miscomputed check, inedible entrees, rude service

Reservations



Centralized reservation systems, like Telecharge—"Sorry, Lutece is all booked for that night—how about Quilted Giraffe?"

Seating charts and seating preferences like in theaters



Complimentary bar bill if reservations are not honored in 15 minutes

Free meal if not seated within half-hour of reservation

Charges on credit cards for no-shows

Personalized decor

Cones of silence for when it's too noisy

Individual climate control

Adjustable lighting for each table

Food matters

Calories/cholesterol content available on request

Pepper mills left on table

Roving hors d'oeuvres carts, like dim sum

Half-sized portions of entrees and desserts

Option of ordering without butter or salt

Good, simple home cooking—like Mama's

Macrobiotic business lunches

Nostalgic revivals

Free iced-tea refills

BYOB with corkage fee

Second pot of tea free

Bring back cafeterias (New York)

Return to supper clubs—dining and dancing

Water without asking

Caraway seeds back in the rye bread (New York)

Return of Schraffts, Luchows and Chock Full O' Nuts (New York)

Parisian-style breakfast with huge cups of cafe au lait

Social-conscience innovations

Cut back tax, add 5 percent contribution from bill to homeless

Leftovers to city shelters

Designated-driver programs for drunken patrons (Los Angeles)

Option on bill to give 10 percent to Meals-on-Wheels ❑

by Claire Regan, R.D.

THE NEW SANDWICHES

Max Karl Winkler

EXOTIC, ECLECTIC AND EVER SO EDIBLE

The recipe for a sandwich could not be less complicated—two slices of bread and a filling of choice. But, of course, the choices are endless, and therein lies the greatest challenge for the creative sandwich maker (the choice of bread is no small matter, either). Still, how to make a memorable sandwich is a challenge worth taking, since sandwiches are growing in popularity and continue to be the preferred lunchtime meal for most Americans.

But sandwiches are no longer confined to luncheon meals; they are now appropriate 24 hours a day. The quickservice segment popularized the breakfast sandwich, and the trend toward casual dining and dual-purpose menus (used for both lunch and dinner) has made sandwiches a common item at dinner meals—from lobster clubs on brioche to grilled eggplant or barbecue brisket.

The National Restaurant Association's menu analysis found the number of sandwiches on menus grew 55 percent between 1984 and 1989. Although hamburgers and cheeseburgers were the most prevalent sandwiches, the number of chicken sandwiches experienced the greatest growth of 185 percent over the five years (see chart).

Versatile, practical and omnipresent

Sandwiches certainly are not a new menu item. Their versatility may explain their everlasting popularity. Although named after the card-playing Earl of Sandwich, who needed a food item he could eat with one hand, sandwiches undoubtedly predated him. Sandwiches are as basic to a culinary repertoire as a black dress or navy blazer is to a wardrobe.

Like fashion, sandwiches reflect the tastes of the day. A 1939 publication, *Sandwich Manual for Professionals* by Louis P. DeGouy, recommends combining Swiss cheese, corned beef and bologna for "a real he-man sandwich which should bring a good price," and presents more than 10 sandwich recipes with tongue as an ingredient. Although common on menus of the 1940s and 1950s, these probably would not be stars on today's menus.

A more sophisticated turn

Today's presentations are more in line with those suggested by Janet Hazen in her 1989 book, *The Sophisticated Sandwich* (Aris Books), where combinations like smoked turkey with cumin slaw and melted gouda cheese on orange-carrot rye are more in keeping with today's tastes. "I recommend the umbrella concept when creating sandwiches," says Hazen, a chef-turned-food-writer. "Each ingredient has to work on its own. It has to be properly cut, properly cooked and delicious by itself as well as in combination with other ingredients," she says. Hazen also strives to make the sandwich ingredients work together as a whole, to make a statement. For example, foods indigenous

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to a certain region or country usually are naturally complementary and make sense together. Finally, Hazen looks to achieve visual and textural contrast in her sandwiches. "My two-pepper chicken salad is a good example of the umbrella concept. The soft chicken is contrasted with crunchy,

BAKED ITALIAN MELT WITH PESTO

Serves 6

Ingredients:
6 soft Italian rolls, halved
1 bunch arugula, washed and stemmed
3 large roasted red peppers, peeled, seeded and sliced
1½ lbs. hot coppa, sliced thin (see *Cook's note* at end)
2–3 jars marinated artichoke hearts, drained and halved
1 lb. mozzarella cheese, sliced

PESTO
2 bunches basil, washed and stemmed
2 cloves garlic
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
¼ cup pine nuts
⅓ cup olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste

Method:
Preheat oven to 400° F. Place pesto ingredients in blender and blend for 2 minutes to smooth paste, scraping sides of blender from time to time. Add a little water if necessary to thin pesto. Taste and adjust seasoning.

Spread each piece of roll with pesto and place some arugula on all pieces. Layer red peppers, coppa and artichokes on six pieces. Press firmly to secure ingredients. Top with cheese.

Place rolls in oven and bake until cheese has melted and ingredients are warm. Top with a second piece of roll and serve immediately.

Cook's note: Hot coppa is cured or cooked pork shoulder rolled in black pepper, dried and then cured. The result is slightly salty, spicy, flavorful meat. If you prefer a more subtle taste, use mild coppa, which is not rolled in black pepper. These meats are available at Italian delis or gourmet food markets.

—Janet Hazen, *The Sophisticated Sandwich*

Sandwiches on menus*

Chicken sandwiches grew by 185 percent

	1984		1989		Percent change
	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	in number 1984-1989
Total sandwiches	*330*	*100%*	*513*	*100%*	*+55%*
Hamburgers & cheeseburgers	112	34	141	27	+26
Other beef	56	17	114	22	+104
Seafood	40	12	57	11	+43
Pork/ham	40	12	54	11	+35
Chicken	13	4	37	7	+185
Club	10	3	25	5	+150
Hot dog, sausage, salami	14	4	22	4	+57
Mixed meats & cheese	8	2	21	4	+163
Turkey	15	5	21	4	+40
Cheese	10	3	13	3	+30
Vegetable	2	<1	3	<1	+50
Lamb/veal		0	3	<1	
Egg	10	3	2	<1	−80

Source: National Restaurant Association, 1989

**This information is taken from the association's analysis of menus submitted to the Great Menu Contest. Analysis was done of randomly selected menus, 50 from 1984 entries and 50 from 1989*

colorful peppers. Cilantro gives it a lively, Latin edge, which is complemented by toasted pumpkin seeds, spicy chipotle mayonnaise and corn bread," Hazen says.

To get started

To get started generating new ideas for sandwiches, try thinking as Hazen does. She considers all variations of different foods, out of the sandwich context. Then she thinks about combinations of foods that seem natural together, like ham and pumpkin or lamb and tahini. She also looks for foods other than sliced bread as a holder for the sandwich ingredients. For example, she uses a potato galette as the base for an open-face sandwich of Swiss raclette cheese, caramelized onions and cornichons, and risotto squares for a combination of grilled tuna and spinach. She also divides sandwiches into five categories: room-temperature sandwiches, warm and melted sandwiches, baked sandwiches, grilled sandwiches and open-face sandwiches.

If new sandwich ideas do not come easily, you can learn from Carbur's Restaurant, a 180-seat establishment in Plattsburgh, New York, that features 50 sandwiches on its menu. To solicit new ideas, Carbur's held a contest. Two entries—one from an employee and one from a patron—were chosen for the menu from more than 100 submissions.

McNamara's Band-wich combines roast beef, Swiss cheese, bacon, lettuce and barbecue sauce; and Kathy's Vegetarian Delight consists of avocado spread, sprouts, Swiss and cheddar cheeses, lettuce and tomato.

Another tip you can borrow from Carbur's is to think of catchy names and snappy descriptions for your creations. One of Carbur's top sellers is the "Mae West." Manager Patti Jo Collins-Fredette attributes its popularity to the way it's described: "supple turkey bosom smothered in mushrooms and Swiss cheese with tarragon mayo." Carbur's grilled knockwurst with sauerkraut and broiled Swiss cheese is known as "For Better or Wurst" and the French dip is featured as "Jacques Le Dipper."

Welcome to the new age of sandwich production! ❑

Thailand, with its uncrowded beaches, colorful street vendors, royal palaces, Buddhist temples and brilliant flowers, is becoming a popular travel destination. But food writers, cookbook authors, chefs and restaurant owners are going to Thailand for another reason: to see for themselves what techniques and ingredients are responsible for the cuisine's harmonious blending of the spicy, sweet, sour, salty and aromatic. And they're bringing back what they're learning and laying it before the American consumer. Some are duplicating the Thai dishes in their kitchens and cookbooks, and some are applying the new principles to their own styles, adding Thai flavors to dishes that are basically French or American.

At their Los Angeles City Restaurant, Mary Sue Milliken and her partner Susan Feniger specialize in dishes inspired by the Far East. Feniger traveled to India and Milliken worked in a hotel kitchen in Bangkok for a month. They believe learning about a country's culture and working with the people teaches nuances about the food that you can't get from reading a book. "If you're going to feature a food, you need that understanding," says Feniger.

The philosophy behind Thai cooking is one of balance. For example, the spiciness of chilies is tempered by the sweetness of coconut milk. Or pieces of fresh fruit and raw vegetables are placed beside a hot dish to cool the palate. Yet, unlike Chinese dishes, Thai flavors remain distinct and pure.

"All passionate and intense," is how Indian-born cookbook author Madhur Jaffrey describes Thai cooking. "No country has that intensity and contrast of flavor—put together in a most amazing way."

The lessons of Thailand

Having an open mind to try new ingredients is what French-born Yannick Cam, chef and co-owner of Le Pavillon in Washington DC, learned from his trip to Thailand. Although Thai dishes aren't appropriate at his upscale French restaurant, he has been able to incorporate a Thai influence. For example, Cam serves a Thai-style curry paste with beignets of soft-shell crabs. But the curry is a milder variety, without the traditional shrimp paste.

The Thai combinations of hot and acid have won over cookbook author Barbara Kafka, who hopes to visit Thailand soon. Because of its wide use of chilies, Kafka compares Thai cuisine to the foods of Mexico and the southwestern United States. She doesn't try to duplicate authentic Thai dishes, but uses Thai flavors in many of her recipes. For example, in a hot and spicy soup she substitutes Worcestershire sauce for the Thai sauce *nam pla*. Both are fish-based sauces, she points out.

Jaffrey is an example of someone who both prepares authentic Thai dishes and also likes to combine Thai techniques and flavors with other

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Herbs, fruits and vegetables are sold by vendors on the city streets and from boats at the floating market.

©Dallas & John Heaton/Uniphoto

styles. In her cookbook, *Far Eastern Cookery*, she duplicates Thai recipes. But in *Easy East/West Menus for Family and Friends*, she has a recipe for a tuna salad that uses typical Thai seasonings as well as shallots, mint and lime. Another recipe piles lettuce and mint next to a tart and spicy chicken salad—for contrast and balance.

An abundance of tastes

To Americans just learning about Thai food, "hot" usually comes to mind when Thai cuisine is mentioned. But Thai food prepared correctly should present the hotness as only one part of the dish—offset or balanced by other flavors. An example of how this works is the melon sold by the street vendors of Bangkok. The melon chunks are topped with dried shrimp and hot chilies; the resulting taste sensation is a balance of salty, sweet, hot and cool.

The chilies, which are a predominant ingredient in Thai food, are used mainly in the curries. Thai curries are different from Indian curries in that they are a blend of chilies with fresh aromatic leaves, roots and herbs, all pounded together into a paste, whereas Indian curries depend upon dry ingredients. The curries come in established colors, with the colors giving the clue as to the main ingredients and the degree of hotness. A yellow curry is fairly mild, and usually preferred by most Americans. A deceptively cool green color signals that the sauce is very hot.

Millikin uses the red curry paste, her favorite, in two dishes in her restaurant—one a duck dish and the other a steamed mussel entree, which she tries to make as authentic as possible.

Rice is a staple of the Thai diet, serving as a background and a counterbalance to the spicy food. Noodles are also plentiful. *Mee Grob*, a dish so popular it could be called the national dish, uses *sen mee*, which are noodles made from rice, as one of its principal ingredients. The *sen mee*, which puff up when they are plunged into hot oil, are mixed with shrimp, pork and chicken, rice vinegar, palm sugar, eggs and *nam pla*.

The Thais use coconut milk to counteract the fiery chilies and to add body to dishes. One of Milliken's fondest memories of her Bangkok apprenticeship is of the huge machine used for producing coconut milk. She likened it to a giant garlic press, so big it took three people sitting on the lever to pull it to extract the juice from the coconut. American cooks don't need to purchase such a machine; coconut milk is sold in cans in many supermarkets or it can be made in the kitchen—by pouring warm water over grated coconut and then squeezing the mixture through cheesecloth.

Exotic produce

Much of what grows in Thailand's tropical climate is unfamiliar to Americans. On Jaffrey's first trip to Thailand in the late '60s, she left her sick husband in the hotel and went shopping. She couldn't speak Thai, so she bought fruits and vegetables made out of clay at a nearby shop, then took her clay produce to the food market. Jaffrey made it known she

wanted the real-life equivalents of the clay items. Then she took her purchases back to the hotel and had a picnic with her husband. She found the produce so fresh and aromatic that she's been going back for more ever since.

Pineapple is at its sweetest in Thailand. Bananas come in at least 10 varieties, some cooked to add to main dishes and some used for desserts. Melons, papayas and mangoes are plentiful. One fruit, the *durian*, always makes an impression on foreigners experiencing it for the first time. It has a foul smell—but a sweet taste. "Like eating cheese and fruit together," is how Jaffrey describes it.

Lemon grass, many different varieties of mint and basil, cilantro (its seeds and roots as well as the leaves), tamarind and the leaves of the kaffir lime are the principal herbs.

Thais believe food should be pretty to look at, feeding the mind as well as the body. Even the street vendors will take time to arrange and decorate their foods in an artful manner.

Asian markets are the best source in the United States for Thai ingredients. If fresh is unavailable, the seasoning in powder or dried-leaf form can be substituted. But for some cooks only fresh will do. Joe Schultz, owner/chef of India Joze in Santa Cruz, California, will use a fresh American substitute if he can't find the fresh Thai ingredient, even if the resulting taste isn't exactly the same.

Learning in Thailand

When Jaffrey is in Thailand, she puts herself in the hands of friends, trusting them to show her the best Thai dishes, either by serving them in their homes, or taking her to restaurants that serve them.

When traveling to Thailand, it is best to have contacts, but for those who don't know anyone in Thailand, there are other ways to learn about the cuisine. Going from restaurant to restaurant is one obvious way. Schultz urges fellow food lovers not to be shy about visiting Thai restaurant kitchens. "The Thais don't have a problem with people walking into their kitchens," he says.

Highly recommended by recent visitors is the cooking school at Bangkok's Oriental Hotel. The school is open to anyone, not just guests of the hotel. The week-long course is taught by a native Thai, Chalie Amatyakul, who is fluent in English, French and German.

Thai-style back home

Once back in the United States, it may not be possible to find all the authentic Thai ingredients—*nam pla* for the salty; the herbs for the aromatic; palm sugar and coconut milk for sweet; Thai curries for spicy; lemon grass, limes and tamarind for sour. But some of the seasonings are staples of American cupboards, too—garlic, onion, sweet basil, coriander, ginger, mint, chili peppers. And with some inventiveness and experimentation and lots of tasting, the American chef can use what's available to arrive at the harmony that is the essence of Thai food. ❑

Serves 8–10

Ingredients:
1 lb. *sen mee* (thin rice noodles)
1 cup cooking oil
1½ cups minced mixture of pork, shrimp and chicken
1 cup yellow bean curd, cubed and crisp fried
½ cup white *tao jiaw* (pickled soy beans)
½ cup each of chopped shallots and garlic, crisp fried
5 eggs
¼ cup each vinegar and *nam pla* (Thai fish sauce)
1 tspn. salt
5 Tbs. sugar
1 tspn. roasted chili powder

Method:
Sprinkle noodles with cold water and leave to soften for a few minutes. If they are not uniformly soft or are too dry, sprinkle more water on them. Keep them moist until frying time.

Deep-fry in hot oil over very high heat until golden. Remove from oil and keep warm, wrapped in a paper towel so that they remain crisp until needed.

Heat one cup of cooking oil and fry minced mixture of pork, chicken and shrimp. Add fried shallots and garlic. Stir until well mixed and cooked; add bean curd, tao jiaw, salt and stir.

Add eggs, one at a time; stir and turn the contents continuously until all eggs are used. Add more oil if necessary. Sprinkle vinegar, nam pla and sugar. Keep stirring until the mixture is well turned and all the liquid has evaporated. It should taste sweet and salty. Roasted chili powder can be added to taste. Mix the crisp fried noodles and heat gently over medium heat.

Garnish with sliced pickled garlic, chilies and coriander. Serve with bean sprouts.

—The Oriental Hotel

Serves 4

Ingredients:
2 Tbs. long-grain rice
2 6½-oz. cans white tuna (packed in water)
5 shallots, peeled and sliced thin
1½ tspns. sugar
1 tspn. soy sauce
2 cloves garlic, lightly crushed and chopped fine
4 Tbs. fresh lime juice
¼ tspn. cayenne pepper
Freshly ground black pepper
½ well-packed cup of chopped fresh mint plus extra sprigs for garnishing
½ tspn. unsalted butter for each slice of bread (optional)
4–8 slices of bread

Method:
Heat a small cast-iron frying pan over a medium flame. When pan is hot, put in the rice. Stir and roast the rice until it turns light brown in color. (A few grains may be darker, a few lighter; some may even pop.) Allow rice to cool slightly and then grind it in a clean coffee grinder.

Empty tuna and all the liquid in cans into bowl. Flake the fish. Add shallots, sugar, soy sauce, garlic, lime juice, cayenne, black pepper, ground rice and chopped mint. Mix and taste for seasoning.

Just before serving, butter one side of each slice of bread with ½ teaspoon butter, and toast to golden in a toaster oven or a preheated broiler, toasting one side first, then the other. Put some salad on each toast, garnish with a sprig of mint and serve.

—Easy East/West Menus for Family and Friends, Madhur Jaffrey

#103

A political interview

Recently I was preparing for a meeting with one of my senators. I laid my head back against the chair, my eyelids got a little heavy . . . and all of a sudden, I found myself in the senator's office commencing this dialogue.

Me: Senator, what is the most pressing issue you are addressing now?

Senator: Deficit reduction, my boy, deficit reduction. Without a doubt, deficit reduction is priority one, two and three for me.

Me: Well, with a national debt rapidly approaching three trillion dollars, that certainly is a worthy issue.

Senator: Now hold on here a minute, hold on. Who said anything about the national debt? I'm talking about my campaign debt. I've got fundraisers all over the country working to reduce that deficit of mine. Matter of fact, there's an event tonight. Want to buy a ticket?

Me: Before I decide, let's talk about some other major issues.

Senator: Absolutely. Go right ahead.

Me: Senator, what was your position on the minimum wage?

Senator: Minimum wage. Minimum wage. Oh yes! I was against it, absolutely against it. Always have been.

Me: But senator, the records show you consistently voted for it.

Senator: That's just strategy, just strategy. By voting for the minimum wage, I was really opposing it. You see, what I favor is a *maximum* wage, not a minimum wage. And so by voting for a minimum wage, which I'm against, I was really voting for a maximum wage, which I'm all for; and as the minimum goes up, the closer we get to the maximum. That's part of my brilliant strategy. Young man, you look perplexed!

Me: Let's move on. Senator, what is your position on parental leave?

Senator: I'm all for it, my boy. I've been trying to get my wife's mother to leave our home for the last 14 years. I will certainly support legislation that gets that done.

Me: Senator, what is your position on mandatory health?

Senator: There's no question, young man, we've got to mandate health for everyone. Everybody has got to have some sort of health. We can't have no-health people walking around. It's unhealthy.

Me: Senator, what is your position on taxes?

Senator: I'm against taxes, always have been. I don't pay taxes myself, so you can see that I have the courage of my convictions. My strategy here—and it's a brilliant strategy I might add—is for business not to pay any taxes at all. Now it's true that in order to achieve that we'll have to vote for some things that will eliminate profits. But think of it. No profits, no taxes.

Me: There's something that doesn't make sense there, but let's continue. Senator, what is your position on immigration?

Senator: I'm all for it, young man, always have been—provided it's done right. My strategy here is to open our borders to everyone who wants to come in, but I think we have to charge an entrance fee or an admission fee. After all, when you and I go to a ballpark or a movie, we pay an admission fee; so when people want to come here, why shouldn't they do the same thing? I figure $10,000 per person is a nice round number.

Me: Well that's certainly a different perspective. Moving on, senator, what do you think about the solid-waste issue?

Senator: I have my staff digging into that.

Me: Where did you stand on the congressional pay raise?

Senator: I was up front on that one, my boy.

Me: How about the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit?

Senator: I think the bigger the job, the bigger the credit, any kind of credit. Being a senator is a big job. That's why I take a lot of credit.

Me: What about the business-meal deduction?

Senator: Don't you worry, young man, I'm all right on that one!

Me: Senator, where do you stand on inflation?

Senator: I think we have to sit on it for a while.

Me: Are you working on bills right now?

Senator: I'm always working on bills. Right now, I'm working on the bills for my new wife's fur coat—er . . . rather my wife's new fur coat and my son's BMW.

Me: What about the trade deficit?

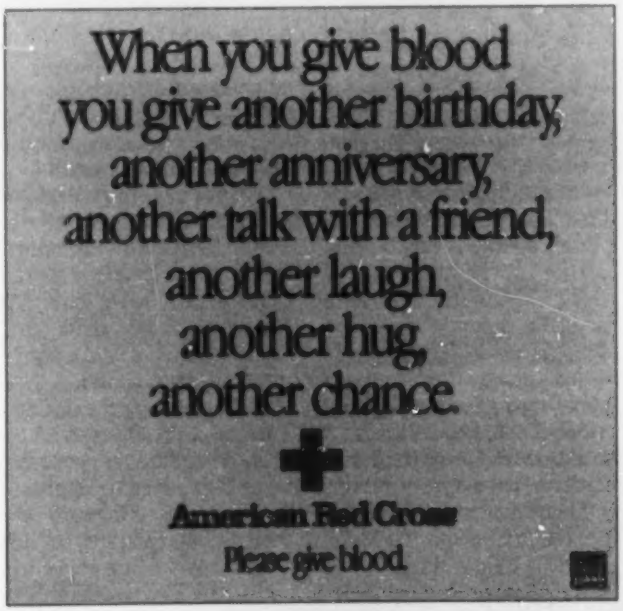
Senator: One of two things will happen. It will go up, or it will go down.

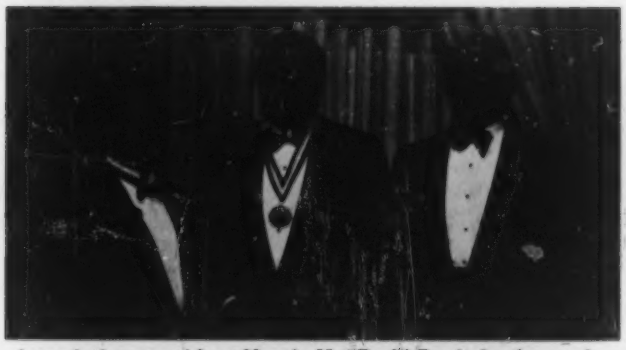
Me: Is there anything else you want to say, senator?

Senator: Are you going to buy a ticket to my fundraiser tonight?

All of a sudden the phone rang, and I realized I had been in a semi-sleep. So none of this really happened. On the other hand, I have met with legislators who . . . well, never mind.

Fisher's Law #103: When talking with legislators, be more informed on the issues important to you than they are.





Association president Harris H. "Bud" Rusitzky (center), flanked by National Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM) President Ira Kaplan (left) and NAFEM Vice President Chuck Brown (right), received the Doctorate of Foodservice Award at the recent NAFEM/89 All-Industry Banquet in Dallas.

Director Herman Cain addresses CIA graduates

"Life is just a minute and your graduation is the completion of just one second of that minute. I cannot tell you what to do with the remaining 59 seconds, but use them to make a difference in the lives of others as well as your own."

Those were the words of National Restaurant Association Director Herman Cain, president and chief executive officer of Godfather's Pizza, Inc., during his recent address to the graduating class at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York.

While emphasizing the importance of making a difference, Cain also urged the graduates to enjoy their profession. "We were put on this planet to make a difference; but when we strive to make a difference in our journey of success, we must also be happy."

Vice president Hurst speaks to students at "Kid's Diner"

Association vice president Mike Hurst also spoke to young people recently. He addressed the students of Baltimore's Kid's Diner, a work/study program designed for high school students who are receiving a vocational education in the foodservice, horticulture, business and construction trades.

Hurst discussed career opportunities with the Kid's Diner students. He applauded their work at the full-service diner, which is operated by students and offers them on-the-job training in all types of foodservice jobs.

Dr. Earl Jones, director of vocational opportunities and curriculum at the Office of Vocational Programs in Baltimore, says the students learned a lot from Hurst's shared experiences. "Students had a real opportunity to hear, firsthand, about the world of work as it relates to restaurants. They have a better sense of what is expected of them and how they can apply their work experience upon graduating," Jones reports.

—Anne Papa

1990 wholesale food price outlook

For the 66th year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has presented its annual outlook for food prices. Here is a look at what is ahead in 1990, based on the November 1989 USDA conference.

After a year of paying for residual effects of the 1988 drought, the 1990 outlook for wholesale food prices calls for a break. USDA predicts that when all the figures are in, retail food prices will have shot up 6 percent in 1989, largely due to price increases in cereals, bakery products, fats, oils and processed vegetables during the first half of the year. For 1990, USDA expects that food prices will rise a more modest 3 to 5 percent, because prospects look good for record meat supplies and larger crops.

Beef production in 1990 should be up a modest 1 percent above 1989 levels—largely because of increases in slaughter weights. However, population growth and an expected increase in exports to Japan and Korea could translate into little, if any, increase in domestic supply. Inventories remained below 100 million head in 1989, with little change expected in 1990. Imports are expected to remain stable or decline from 1989 levels. Per capita beef consumption is expected to be 68 pounds per person in 1990, down from nearly 80 pounds in 1986.

The relatively stable supply of beef and lower consumption, combined with pressure from ample supplies of competing meats, means that the price of beef will not go up dramatically in 1990. Grain-fed steer prices at Omaha should average between $71 and $77 per cwt.—up from $72.50 per cwt. in 1989 and $69.50 per cwt. in 1988. After rising 5 percent in 1988 and 1989, retail beef prices are expected to go up a lesser 1 to 2 percent in 1990.

Commercial pork production is expected to be slightly higher in 1990 than in 1989, as substantial increases in fall production are likely to offset year-over-year production declines in the spring and summer. Total production could increase 1 percent to reach 16 billion pounds for the first time since 1980. Strong demand in the second half of 1989 should carry over into the first part of 1990. Although prices may be higher through the first half of 1990, expanding supplies and pressure from competing meats should push pork prices down below 1989 levels by mid-fall.

First-quarter pork supplies should be slightly higher than in the first quarter of 1989, as the large 1989 summer pig crop goes to slaughter. Second and third-quarter supplies could fall below 1989 quarter levels, because of unusually high 1989 slaughters. If returns to producers continue to remain at an elevated level, pork production could be up by as much as 5 percent this fall.

Most prices will decline in 1990

Commodity	1989 (preliminary)	1990 (projected)
Beef ($/cwt.)[1]	$72.50	$71 to $77
Pork ($/cwt.)[2]	$44	$45
Broilers (cents/lb.)[3]	59 to 60 cents	49 to 55 cents
Turkeys (cents/lb.)[4]	64 to 65 cents	57 to 63 cents
Eggs (cents/dozen)[5]	79 to 81 cents	66 to 72 cents
Milk ($/cwt.)[6]	$13.30 to $13.40	$12.14 to $12.34

[1]*choice steers-Omaha*
[2]*barrows and gilts, a seven-market average*
[3]*12-city average*
[4]*Eastern region, 8 to 16-pound hens*
[5]*cartoned, grade A, large white eggs in New York City*
[6]*U.S. annual average farm milk price*
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Accordingly, average wholesale pork prices (based on a seven-market average) are expected to be in the mid-$40 per cwt. in the first and second quarters of 1990. Supply shortfalls could push prices up to the mid-to-high $40s range in the third quarter. Larger supplies, competition from beef prices and packer competition could cause pork prices to drop to the low $40 per cwt. in the fall.

For 1990, barrow and gilt prices should average $45 per cwt., slightly higher than the $44 per cwt. in 1989. Retail prices for pork should average between $1.85 and $1.87 per pound—a 2 percent increase over 1989. The increase in price for pork relative to other meats could dampen its demand.

Because of high consumer demand, poultry production exploded during the 1980s, and growth should continue into this year. Broiler production is expected to increase about 7 percent in 1990, following a similar advance in production in 1989. Compared to 1989 levels, 1990 production should be up more than 8 percent in the first quarter and more than 7 percent in the second quarter, before soft prices curtail production advances to slightly below 7 percent in both the third and fourth quarters.

Consumer demand for chicken is likely to remain strong. Per-capita consumption of broilers, which was estimated at 65 pounds per person in 1989, is expected to increase by another 5 pounds in 1990. This strong demand should cushion price declines somewhat. First-quarter prices for broilers (based on a 12-city average) should range between 48 and 54 cents per pound, before seasonal increases push prices upward in the second and third quarters. Prices should drop again in the fourth quarter. For the year, broiler prices should average 49 to 55 cents per pound in 1990—down from 59 to 60 cents per pound in 1989. Retail prices should decline in 1990 to average in the low-to-mid 80-cents-per-pound range for whole fresh fryers.

Turkey production should increase between 4 and 5 percent in 1990, after an expected 6 percent increase in 1989. Per-capita consumption, which increased from 10.5 pounds per person in 1980 to an estimated 16.7 pounds in 1989, could exceed 17 pounds per person in 1990. These increases are largely a result of increased availability of cut-up and processed forms of turkey. Production should be up 12 percent in the first quarter of 1990, compared with the first quarter of 1989. It should then increase 8 percent in the second quarter before leveling off to 1989 levels in the third and fourth quarters.

Regional wholesale hen prices in the East should average 55 to 61 cents per pound during the first quarter—down from 62 cents per pound in 1989. They should remain low during the second quarter before advancing in the third and fourth quarters, as a result of decreased production. For the year, wholesale turkey prices should average 57 to 63 cents per pound, down from 64 to 65 cents per pound in 1989.

After declining 3 percent in 1989, egg production should increase 2 percent in 1990 to reach 5.7 billion dozen. Declines in consumer use—from 271 eggs per person in 1980 to 235 eggs per person in 1989 and 1990—are attributed to consumer concerns over cholesterol and salmonella as well as changing eating habits. Table-egg production declined nearly 4 percent in 1989, because of heavy producer losses in 1987 and 1988; but it should advance 2 percent in 1990 as producers make up for losses.

Subsequently, wholesale egg prices are expected to decline in 1990 as supplies increase. Wholesale egg prices should average 66 to 72 cents per dozen in 1990, compared with 79 to 81 cents per dozen in 1989. First-quarter prices in 1990 should average around 76 to 80 cents per dozen, but additional supplies should push prices to the mid-to-low 60-cents-per-dozen level in the second half of the year.

Last year was an unusual year for milk production, and it leads to uncertainty about 1990 milk production. Although production was high in early 1989 (2 percent above 1988 levels), feed problems (exhausted supplies of good quality forage and a delay in hay arrival) caused declines in milk output per cow. Combined with continued slaughter of milk cows, milk output from July to October was down between 1 and 2 percent from 1988 levels. Consequently, milk prices for 1989 are expected to be more than $1 per cwt. higher than in 1988.

For 1990, forage quality and the damage to milk-per-cow output from 1989 leads to some uncertainty of supply availability early in the year. However, if feed prices continue to drop, milk production should be up for most of 1990, growing 1 to 3 percent. Increased production should bring about a decline in wholesale prices to near their 1988 level of $12.24 per cwt.

Production of noncitrus fruits is expected to be only 3 percent higher in 1989/90 than in 1988/89, because of various weather problems. Supplies of grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears and strawberries were tighter in 1989 than in the previous

year, while apple, apricot, cherry, plum and prune crops were larger in 1989 than in 1988. Prices tended to be higher in 1989 than in 1988.

Overall, citrus production should be down 10 percent in 1989/90. A freeze last February helped cause a 14 percent decline in Florida citrus production. Production in Texas and Arizona is also expected to be below last year's level, while California should show some production advances. The prices for oranges and fresh lemons are expected to be higher this year because of tighter supplies; and although supply should be sufficient, grapefruit prices will also be higher.

Preliminary estimates for the 10 major fresh vegetables (asparagus, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, sweet corn, lettuce, onions, tomatoes and honeydews*) place production for 1989 at 253 million cwt.—up 1 percent from 1988. Further projections by the USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) call for production increases of 2 percent per year through 1995. Wholesale prices for fresh vegetables are expected to advance 6 percent in 1989 and a lesser 3 percent in 1990.

The prices for fresh vegetables could be affected by legislation regarding food safety and the use of pesticides, labor, chemical availability and water quality. Each issue could have a negative effect on supply levels, which would increase the cost to consumers.

—Nancy Michalski

**This is not an error. USDA considers honeydews to be part of this category.*

The relationship between weather and food prices

Will a sudden change in temperature affect the price of produce? Will rain raise the cost of lettuce? If there is a drought in Iowa, will wheat prices be higher in the coming months? Where the weather is concerned, all commodities are not created equal.

The widespread drought of 1988 brought renewed attention to the relationship between weather and food prices, and the delicate balance between the two. Since, to a large extent, prices are determined by whether supply is sufficient to meet demand, it is important to understand how weather influences the food supply.

Grains and oilseeds

Drought has its most significant effects on grain products and oilseeds, decreasing yields—with results varying by the time at which the dry spell occurs. Long periods of dryness and heat while the grains are maturing cause more rapid growth but insufficient maturation. These conditions result in low-density, small grains that produce low yields. The shortfall in supplies often leads to price increases.

If the dry spell occurs soon after planting, fewer shoots may grow, also decreasing yield. Corn tends to be very susceptible to dryness during flowering—the time at which the ears start to appear. Since corn flowers only during one specific two-week period, extended heat or dryness during that time can retard growth.

While dryness can pose a problem, moisture in abundance or at the wrong time can also be trouble for grain products. Moisture is desirable when grains and oilseeds are maturing. However, excess moisture during planting or harvesting times can prevent farmers from using their farm equipment, and rusts and smuts can form on wheat if it is not harvested promptly. In addition, too much moisture around harvest time can lead to increased chance of spoilage if grain cannot be sufficiently dried.

Another climatic problem for grains involves depressed temperatures. Extremely cold temperatures can kill winter wheat.

Because these problems affect yields and overall supply, they can result in higher prices for flour, bakery products, cereals and vegetable oils.

Meat and poultry

The prices for meat and poultry are related in part to grain yields. Lower yields of corn and other feeds can raise the costs of these feeds, which can in turn cause the prices of beef, pork and, to a lesser extent, poultry, to rise. Cattle and hogs, which require more feed to develop a pound of meat, tend to show the affect of higher feed costs more so than does poultry. Less feed means lower slaughter weights in cattle, hogs and poultry, which may also lead to lower supplies and thus higher costs.

Severe weather in the winter can pose special problems for beef cattle. Any difficulties in receiving feed or in getting feed to the cattle may increase the number of cattle that die.

Poultry tends to be the most resilient of all farm livestock, showing the weakest relation between weather and production. First, the average broiler chicken, the type most typically used in foodservice, takes roughly 45 days to mature. Thus any serious problem could temporarily raise chicken prices but not for a long period—because turnaround and restocking is rapid. In contrast, if

Herbs grow in popularity

According to the recently released 1987 Census of Agriculture, herb farming is becoming more popular. Between 1982 and 1987, acreage devoted to herbs increased 122 percent and the quantity of herbs harvested mushroomed 248 percent.

The majority of herbs are grown in the western portion of the United States. California leads the nation in garlic and parsley acreage, Washington is the top dill producer, and Oregon is the leading grower of mint. Hawaii is the only state to grow ginger root, and Florida has more acreage devoted to growing watercress than any other state.

Source: *USDA, Agricultural Outlook*, October 1989

This diagram shows the principal producing states for a variety of commodities. By understanding how weather can affect production and where major supplies come from, restaurateurs can see if their supplies may be affected.

breeder stock is destroyed for hogs and cattle, the effect may be longer lasting, because it takes much longer for cows and pigs to reach maturity and recover the loss. Second, most henhouses are now climate controlled, so that severe heat and cold do not pose as much of a problem as in the past.

In fact, it is the balance between supply and demand that has the greatest effect on poultry prices. Most recently, high foodservice demand for chicken has kept broiler prices elevated (see "1990 wholesale food price outlook" elsewhere in this column).

Dairy and eggs

The production of milk and eggs can also be indirectly affected by drought, mostly because of lower feed supplies for dairy cows and layer hens. Reduced feed tends to reduce production of milk and eggs. Since both laying hens and dairy cows are kept under highly controlled environments, extremes in the weather tend to have a negligible affect on milk and egg production.

Fruits and vegetables

While drought has a severe affect on grains and many oilseeds, it typically does not have an affect on fruits and vegetables, because most commercial fruits and vegetables are grown on irrigated farms.

Too much rain, on the other hand, can be a definite nemesis for produce. Even one extra day of rain can decrease supplies of some vegetables, because they cannot be harvested promptly before molds and funguses develop. Ground fruits, especially strawberries, and vegetables also may succumb to rot, because of excess ground moisture.

Tree fruits, such as apples and pears, can also be damaged by too much rain. Excessive moisture can promote blights and the breeding of various bugs. Rain can inhibit pollenation and cause buds that could have developed into fruit to fall to the ground.

Freezing temperatures damage citrus crops by affecting fruit and blossoms on the trees. In addition, a cold snap—when temperatures drop to freezing after budding or growth has started—can kill fruit buds, damage fruit and harm exposed vegetable plants.

A word of caution

These scenarios are only meant to illustrate the general trends; each crop will show variation as a result of particular growing conditions. USDA and state-level agricultural specialists are the best sources for information on how a supply of a specific crop is being affected by the weather.

—Nancy Michalski

Exotic produce

Consumers have shown an increased interest in exotic varieties of produce. Increased consumer emphasis on "healthy" eating and demand for more options, combined with more travel abroad and introduction of exotic produce by recent immigrants, have all contributed to the higher demand for specialty produce. As a result, more domestic acreage has been devoted to producing nontraditional produce, and there has also been an increase in the importation of exotic produce, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Increased imports, domestic production

In Arizona, the harvested acreage of bok choy, a Chinese cabbage used in many Asian dishes—especially stir-fry—quadrupled between 1981 to 1986. Harvested acreage of Santa Claus, Casaba, Crenshaw and Persian melons climbed 80 percent between 1981 and 1986 in California. Harvested acreage of various chili peppers in Maryland more than tripled from 1984 to 1986.

Imports of jicama, a fleshy tuber that tastes similar to and can be substituted for water chestnuts, have almost quadrupled from 2,335 metric tons in 1980 to 8,886 metric tons in 1987. Imports of bamboo shoots have almost tripled from 10.7 thousand metric tons to 29.3 thousand metric tons between 1980 and 1987. Imports of dasheens, endive, snow peas, chili and other peppers, chayote and fiddlehead fern also rose between 1980 and 1987.

Growing familiarity

A 1987 nationwide study conducted for *The Packer* magazine showed that at least one-third of consumers surveyed had tried alfalfa and bean sprouts, snow peas, pearl onions, pomegranates, parsnips, persimmons, leeks, baby vegetables, kumquats, Chinese cabbage and shallots. Furthermore, at least one-third of the respondents had seen or heard of Belgian endive, bok choy, celeriac, daikon, kohlrabi, parsley root, sunchokes (Jerusalem artichokes), breadfruit, passion fruit, plantains, prickly or cactus pear, and red bananas.

Source: *USDA National Food Review,* October-December 1988

Restaurant occupation costs are up

According to a special analysis of the 1989 National Restaurant Association industry operations survey, occupation costs at full-menu establishments advanced 8 percent in 1988, reflecting higher rent and tax expenses.

After food and payroll expenses, occupation costs are restaurant operators' third-largest expense category. For 1988, according to the latest National Restaurant Association industry operations survey data, full-menu tableservice operators spent 7.9 percent of sales revenue on expenses relating to occupancy. Limited-menu, no-tableservice (fast food) survey participants reported allocating an even higher proportion of their sales to cover occupancy costs—8.8 percent.

Higher rent costs

Of particular note is that occupation costs at full-menu tableservice establishments (which reported operating data for two consecutive years) advanced by almost 8 percent between 1987 and 1988 and by 15 percent at fast food establishments. Higher rent expenses were a major factor behind these occupancy cost increases and reflect escalating rents, which have occurred in many areas of the country.

In 1988, full-menu tableservice survey respondents reported a median rent expense of $292 per seat, compared to a much higher $529 per seat for fast food operators.

Tax expenses up

In addition to higher rent expenses, restaurant operators also reported increased occupancy-related tax expenses. Fast food survey participants reported that between 1987 and 1988 property-tax expenses were up almost 5 percent, while full-menu tableservice operators' property-tax expenses advanced more than 3 percent. For 1988 full-menu tableservice and limited-menu, no-tableservice establishments had a median property-tax expense of $30 per seat and $58 per seat, respectively.

Other occupancy-related tax expenses, which include various state and municipal taxes, also escalated in 1988. Survey participants indicated that between 1987 and 1988 other taxes advanced almost 10 percent at full-menu tableservice establishments and 20 percent at limited-menu, no-tableservice operations. For 1988 the median value for other taxes per seat was $41 at full-menu tableservice operations and $43 for fast food operations.

After food and payroll expenses, occupation costs are restaurant operators' third-largest expense category.

Additional highlights

□ The association's industry operations data also reveal that restaurant occupancy costs varied by the number of years the restaurant had been in business. Full-menu tableservice respondents whose restaurants had been in business for more than 10 years reported a lower median occupation cost per seat of $332, compared to $401 for restaurants that had been in

Fast food establishments had the highest occupation cost per seat

Occupation costs	Full-menu tableservice	Limited-menu tableservice	Limited-menu no tableservice
Rent	$292	$242	$529
Property taxes	30	27	52
Other taxes	41	22	43
Property insurance	72	67	92
Total occupation costs	$372	$331	$684

*median values

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1989*

Occupations costs accounted for almost 8 percent of the full-menu tableservice sales dollar

	Full-menu tableservice	Limited-menu tableservice	Limited-menu no tableservice
Rent	4.7%	3.7%	6.8%
Property taxes	0.6	0.7	0.7
Other taxes	1.3	0.5	0.4
Property insurance	1.3	1.2	0.9
Total occupation costs	7.9%	6.1%	8.8%

*All figures are weighted averages

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1989*

business less than five years.

□ On a square-foot basis, full-menu tableservice operators in 1988 posted a median occupation cost of $13.11 per square foot. The median rent expense was $10.26 per square foot. Fast food survey respondents reported a higher median occupation cost of $24.14 per square foot, with a median rent cost of $20.38 per square foot.

□ Property insurance costs among full-menu tableservice survey respondents remained stable between 1987 and 1988.

□ Occupancy costs differed by region of the country. For full-menu tableservice establishments, operators in the West reported the highest median occupancy cost per seat—$478—while those in the North Central states had the lowest—$303.

—Hudson Riehle

How to order the report

A copy of *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1989* (CS 959) is available to association members for $36 and to nonmembers for $72. This includes shipping and handling charges (overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge). All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 Seventeenth St. N.W., Washington DC 20036. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) at 1-800-424-5156 or (202) 331-5960 in Washington DC.

C-store update

Sales at retail-host restaurants have captured a growing share of industry sales. The National Restaurant Association forecasts that in 1990, retail-host restaurant sales will represent 4.3 percent of total industry food and drink sales.

The National Restaurant Association forecasts that foodservice sales at retail-host restaurants* will reach $10.3 billion in 1990, a real gain of 4.8 percent over 1989. This robust advance can be attributed to sales growth at grocery-convenience stores, more convenience-food departments at gasoline service stations and more meals, snacks and takeout in grocery stores. In 1990 foodservice sales at retail-host restaurants are projected to represent a 4.3 percent share of the industry's foodservice sales—up from 3.5 percent five years ago. In 1980 retail-host restaurants represented just 2.7 percent of industry sales.

Within the retail-host category, there has been rapid foodservice sales growth in gasoline-service-station restaurants and grocery-store restaurants; the annual rate of growth has been in the double digits for many years. According to the National Restaurant Association, food and drink sales at gasoline service stations reached $1.7 billion in 1987—up from $1.5 billion the previous year. Grocery-store-restaurant food and drink sales reached $3.4 billion in 1987—up from $3.0 billion in 1986.

Despite strong annual sales increases, there has been a recent slowdown in the sales growth rate, as the sales base grows larger. For example, in 1983 gasoline-service-station food and drink sales totaled $860 million—an impressive 22 percent gain over 1982. By 1987 gasoline-service-station food and drink sales advanced at a lower 14 percent rate of growth. Still, this 14 percent increase represents a hefty $400 million. The same situation holds true for food and drink sales at grocery-store restaurants: The rate of sales growth dropped from 24 percent in 1983 to 14 percent in 1987.

**The National Restaurant Association defines retail-host restaurants as drug and proprietary-store restaurants, general-merchandise-store restaurants, variety-store restaurants, food-store restaurants, grocery-store restaurants, gasoline-service-station restaurants and miscellaneous retailers. Since the Census Bureau does not define "convenience store," association estimates are reflected in grocery-store restaurants and gasoline-service-station foodservice.*

Sales growth slowing

Additional information from the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) confirms that the sales growth is slowing down at convenience stores (C-stores). In 1988 sales for the total C-store** industry reached $61.2 billion (including gas sales)—a small 2.7 percent increase from 1987. Total merchandise sales, excluding gas, advanced to $39.2 billion in 1988, virtually equal to the $39.1 billion in 1987. According to NACS, C-store unit growth has recently lost momentum; the total number of C-stores increased by only 2.5 percent to 69,200 stores in 1988, compared to a 5.4 percent increase in 1987.

In addition, industry profits before taxes declined more than 11 percent in 1988—down to $1.2 billion from $1.3 billion in 1987. Furthermore, gasoline sales were responsible for most of the modest sales growth rate, increasing 7.3 percent in 1988 to $22.0 billion, compared to a 4.7 percent increase in U.S. gasoline-service station sales.

Fast food: more popular

Despite overall in-store sales slowdowns for C-stores, the total dollar amount spent on fast food*** increased by nearly 16 percent in 1988, reaching its highest point of $5.9 billion. NACS reports that between 1983 and 1988 the total dollar amount spent on fast food more than doubled from the $2.3 billion spent in 1983. The percentage of total merchandise purchases that were fast food rose from 13 percent in 1987 to 15 percent in 1988. Fast food cooked on site exhibited the largest

***The National Association of Convenience Stores defines a convenience store as a 1,500 to 5,000-square-foot establishment with a suitable parking area for customers and an extensive product mix.*

****Includes both fresh and frozen sandwiches, deli services, food cooked on site, fountain drinks, frozen beverages, hot beverages and other fast food.*

percentage increase in sales from 1987 to 1988—up a dramatic 88 percent.

Soft drinks: top item

According to CREST**** data, soft drinks continue to be the most frequently ordered food item. In 1988 these beverages were purchased on 46 percent of all C-store eater occasions.***** Sandwiches were also a popular item—35 percent of eater occasions involved a sandwich. Among the sandwiches, hot dogs and hamburgers were the most popular (10 percent each).

Other frequently ordered items included coffee (9 percent), french fries (8 percent), donuts (5 percent), heros/subs (4 percent), cakes/pastries/tortes and hard-serve ice cream (each 3 percent). Pizza was ordered on nearly 3 percent of eater occasions, and both burritos and fried chicken were ordered on 2 percent of occasions.

According to NACS, deli services, excluding sandwiches, represented the largest contribution (24 percent) to the total C-store/fast food industry sales, reaching almost $1.4 billion in 1988. Fountain drinks ranked second, at $1.1 billion in sales. Fresh sandwich sales were the third-largest category, representing $823 million in sales.

Hot beverages were the only item in the C-store fast food category that exhibited a decline in sales—dropping 33 percent in sales—from $821 million in 1987 to $549 million in 1988. The total dollar amount spent on fast food cooked on site rose from $313 million in 1987 to $588 million in 1988.

Soft drinks and sandwiches top the list of convenience-store purchases

Food item	C-Store	Quickservice
All beverages**	68%	58%
All soft drinks	46	36
Diet soft drinks	20	13
Total hot drinks	9	9
Coffee	8	8
Milk	5	2
Juice	3	2
All sandwiches**	35	38
Hot dogs	10	***
Hamburgers/cheeseburgers	10	23
Heros/subs	4	2
Ham and cheese	3	1
Turkey	3	***
Roast beef	2	2
French fries	8	25
Donuts	5	2
Salads (main and side)	3	11
Cakes/pastries/tortes	3	1
Ice Cream		
Hard-serve ice cream	3	2
Soft-serve ice cream	2	4
Frozen yogurt	1	1
Fried chicken	2	6
Pizza	2	17
Burritos	2	2
Danish/sweet rolls	2	1
Cookies	2	1

**an eater occasion is one meal/snack eaten by one person*
***Only selected segments presented; therefore individual items will not equal total*
****less than 1 percent*
Sources: NPD CREST Annual Report, 1988

Retail-host restaurants* have been increasing their share of total industry food and drink sales

Year	Percent of total foodservice industry food and drink sales
1980	2.7%
1981	2.8
1982	2.9
1983	3.1
1984	3.3
1985	3.5
1986	3.7
1987	3.9
1988	4.1
1989**	4.2
1990**	4.3

**Includes drug and proprietary store restaurants, general-merchandise store restaurants, variety-store restaurants, food-store restaurants, grocery-store restaurants, gasoline-service-station restaurants, and miscellaneous retailers*
***Projected*
Sources: National Restaurant Association

Prepared foods offer more profit

One reason behind the fast food sales growth at C-stores relates to its high gross margin of profitability. For instance, in 1988 food cooked on site had a gross profit margin of 48 percent, compared to 27 for beer or 22 for milk and milk products. Perhaps realizing this, the number of C-stores offering fast food to their customers has risen dramatically. In 1988, 83 percent of C-stores offered consumers prepared foods—up from 73 percent in 1986. Also, more stores offered microwave use than ever before—95 percent of stores had microwave equipment in 1988, compared to 92 percent in 1987.

Food sales at C-stores continue to be primarily takeout purchases. Convenience-store seating for fast food patrons has not expanded at nearly the rate expected. In 1988, 8 percent of C-stores had in-store seating—unchanged from 1987. In addition, the percentage of C-stores offering video rentals has declined rapidly. Video-rental programs, which C-store oper-

*****CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey conducted by one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

******An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.*

Most C-stores offer microwave equipment, fountain drinks and fast food

Percent of convenience stores offering:	1987	1988
Microwave equipment	92%	95%
Fountain drinks	95	96
Prepared foods (fast food)	80	83
Service deli	33	39
On-premises bakery	5	6
Fried chicken	4	3
Pizza	7	4
Video rentals	63	40
Automated-teller machines	12	10
Credit cards	47	68
Lottery tickets	38	51
Seating for fast food	8	8

Source: National Association of Convenience Stores

Fast food items accounted for 15 percent of total convenience store sales in 1988

	Percent of sales[1]	
Product group	**1987**	**1988**
Room temperature items[2]	52.0%	53.0%
Cooler items[3]	32.2	29.0
Fast food[4]	13.1	15.0
Frozen[5]	2.7	2.8

[1]Industry average
[2]Includes bread and cakes, cookies, salty snacks, candy, gum, groceries, health and beauty aids, tobacco, publications, wine/liquor, motor oil and other general merchandise
[3]Includes beer, soft drinks, juices, milk and milk products, packaged deli, produce and eggs
[4]Includes fresh and frozen sandwiches, deli services, food cooked on site, fountain drinks, frozen and hot beverages and other fast food
[5]Includes frozen food, ice cream and ice

Source: National Association of Convenience Stores

ators had hoped would entice a quick meal or snack sale, have fallen from 63 percent in 1987 to only 40 percent in 1988.

Patron differences

Although some similarities exist between C-store patrons and restaurant fast food purchasers, there are more differences.

According to 1988 CREST data:

□ Well over one-third of all C-store fast food was consumed in the car, compared to only 12 percent for quickservice establishments.

□ The vast majority (66 percent) of C-store patrons were between the ages of 18 and 49, compared to a lesser 52 percent of quickservice patrons in that age bracket.

□ The average check per patron was much lower for C-stores—$1.60, contrasted to $2.69 for quickservice and $3.64 for all restaurants (excluding tips).

□ More foodservice patrons go solo to C-stores than to any other type of restaurant—one is the average party size in C-stores, compared to two for quickservice places.

□ While restaurant patrons visited less frequently at the beginning of the week, Monday and Tuesday were quite popular days with C-store patrons. Saturday was popular with both.

□ Sunday was the least-popular day for C-store fast food purchases, capturing less than 10 percent of all weekly eater occasions. Sunday represented 14 percent of occasions for quickservice establishments.

□ Although lunch was nearly as popular in C-stores as at quickservice restaurants (34 percent and 36 percent of eater occasions, respectively), snacking was more popular at C-stores. More than four out of 10 eater occasions in C-stores were for snacks, compared to 16 percent for quickservice places.

□ Just under 5 percent of eater occasions in C-stores were made in a drive-thru, compared to almost 20 percent for a quickservice establishment. However, more C-stores can be expected to add drive-thrus in the years ahead.

What's in the future?

Convenience-store owners are not likely to ease back on such a profitable segment of their operations, especially amidst overall slowdowns in sales. However, they are feeling the pressures of the labor shortage, and the labor-intensiveness of fast food will continue to be weighed against the high profit margins it can generate. According to *Convenience Store News*, the convenience-store industry is divided into two fast food camps: (1) chains focusing on self-serve equipment and labor-saving equipment and (2) those aiming to serve higher-quality products by investing in the labor required to run a competitive foodservice program.

—Elizabeth Gordon

Teenagers: important C-store patrons

Teenagers, who typically buy large amounts of fast food, are important to the convenience-store industry. A recent Gallup survey conducted by *Convenience Store News* indicated that during a typical week during the first half of 1989, teenagers purchased fast food in a C-store an average of 2.19 times. Fountain drinks were the most popular C-store food item; 73 percent of all teens surveyed mentioned fountain drinks as their most recent purchase. Hamburgers, pizza and soft ice cream or yogurt were other favorite purchases.

According to the survey, fast food sold in C-stores appeared to be universally popular among teens. There was no significant variation by demographic factors. However, some foods were more popular in some regions of the country than others. For instance, teens were more likely to buy fountain soda and fried chicken in the South, hamburgers in the South and West, and freshly prepared sandwiches in the East and Midwest. Hot dogs, salad-bar selections and Mexican food were more likely to be purchased in the West.

Foodservice Market Measure–October 1989

The Foodservice Market Measure posted a significant gain in October 1989, with 51 percent of adults reporting they were foodservice patrons on a typical day. This compares to a lower 45 percent in September 1989, and 45 percent one year earlier in October 1988. However, the October increase can be attributed entirely to food purchased for takeout.

The proportion of adults using takeout or delivery reached an all-time high in the 17 months since the Market Measure has tracked behavior. Off-premises purchases were made by 24 percent of adults on a typical day in October 1989, compared to 27 percent who reported eating on premises. In comparison, 18 percent of adults were off-premises patrons on a typical October 1988 day, and from January through September 1989, off-premises patronage of adults averaged 19 percent.

Carryout for both lunch and dinner recorded their highest levels in October. This is only the second time since June 1988 that the proportion of off-premises dinner patrons has equaled or surpassed on-premises customers. The proportion of adults who purchased dinner for off-premises consumption—13 percent—was similar to the 12 percent who ate dinner on premises.

Overall, 27 percent of adults ate on premises in October 1989, similar to the 29 percent who did so in September 1989 as well as in October 1988.

Off-premises demographics

By looking at Foodservice Market Measure data from June, July and August, it is clearly apparent that takeout is particularly popular among younger adults, singles and women who are employed. Takeout is especially popular on Thursday, Friday and Saturday and in the southern United States.

Generally, the likelihood of ordering takeout is edging upward for most consumers. Still, there are some significant gains that should be noted.

- In addition to being more likely than women to purchase takeout, men were also significantly more likely to do so during summer 1989 (22 percent), versus summer 1988 (19 percent).
- Although younger consumers are the most likely takeout customers, the only significant increase was posted by adults 50 to 64 years old, with 14 percent reporting they were takeout customers on a typical day during summer 1989, versus 9 percent last summer.
- Takeout was most popular in the South. The only significant regional gain was made in the South—from 18 percent of adults purchasing takeout on a typical day during summer 1988 to 22 percent during summer 1989.

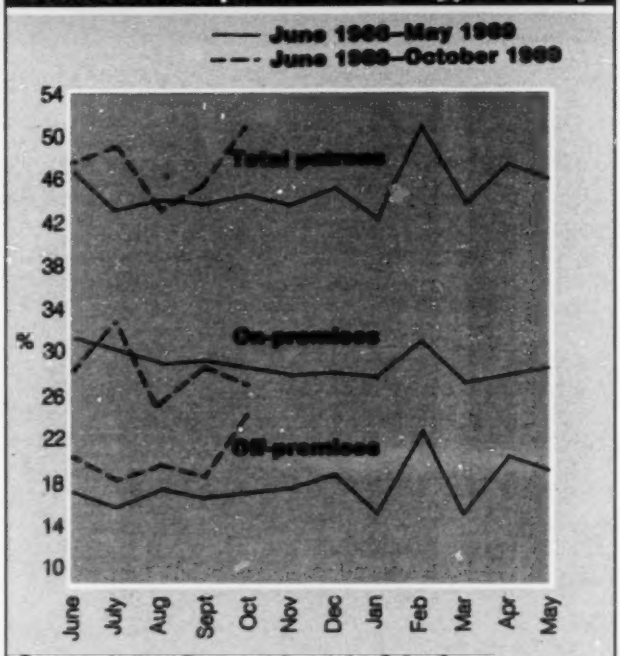
—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons for takeout on a typical day

	June–August 1989
Men	22%
Women	17
18-24 years old	31
25-34 years old	28
35-49 years old	22
50-64 years old	14
65+ years old	6
Married	18
Not married	23
Woman employed	
☐ Full-time	22
☐ Part-time	21
Woman not employed	12
Monday	16
Tuesday	17
Wednesday	18
Thursday	22
Friday	28
Saturday	23
Sunday	17
East	19
Midwest	20
South	22
West	17

Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day



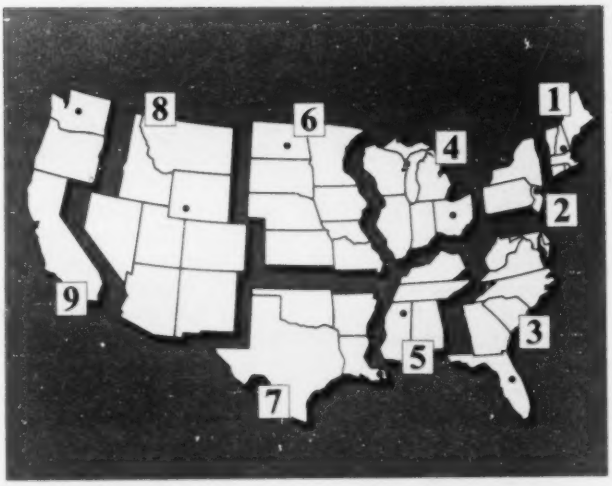
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?
   - ☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.
   - ☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.
2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?
3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



Location: Manchester, NH
Association member: William Gaudes
Operation: Blake's Creamery Incorporated
Profile: Owner of 6 family-style restaurants
In business: 25 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

New Englanders eat more ice cream than people in other parts of the country, so it's no surprise that a chain of restaurants that specialize in ice cream does well in New Hampshire. Blake's Creamery, owner of six Blake's Ice Cream Restaurants in the Manchester area, has been selling dairy products for 90 years and making ice cream for 25.

The restaurants sell a full breakfast menu, specialty sandwiches and light meals; but the desserts, featuring Blake's own premium product in 30 different flavors, are the drawing card.

Manchester, 55 miles north of Boston, was one of the fastest growing hi-tech areas in the country. But growth has leveled, and firms are cutting back their staffs. As a result, finding help has done a complete about-face. Last year, an ad would bring fewer than five replies, whereas this year a help-wanted ad is answered by as many as 50 applicants.

Location: Mountainside, NJ
Association members: Manny and George Georgiadis
Operation: Echo Queen
Profile: Diner with fullservice dining room
In business: 32 years
Seats: 114
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Echo Queen has something for everyone—from fast food to high cuisine to made-from-scratch ethnic specialties. The fish part of the menu alone lists 28 items. Owner **Manny Georgiadis** admits that with help so hard to find, it's becoming more difficult to offer such an extensive menu.

Located on Highway 22, halfway between New York and the Pennsylvania border, the diner attracts travelers as well as residents from the surrounding towns. Georgiadis estimates 90 percent of his business is made up of regulars, including the travelers who have been making the restaurant a stop for years. But business is down by as much as 20 percent, due to the area's lagging economy. To bring in more business, Georgiadis is beginning to advertise again.

Location: Orlando, FL
Association member: Chuck Baker
Operation: Rogers Diner
Profile: Diner-type cafe
In business: 29 years
Seats: 52
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch

Rogers Diner is not near Disney World or any of the other Orlando theme-park attractions, but it has still profited by Orlando's phenomenal growth. Although some complain there is too much competition, Rogers's business has averaged an 18 percent increase over last year. **Chuck Baker,** owner of Rogers Diner, has built up a large repeat business with the people who work in his area; some eat at his restaurant as often as 12 times a week, stopping by for breakfast and returning for lunch.

Breakfast is American style—eggs, bacon, ham, sausage, pancakes, etc. Lunch is a daily entree with a choice of two vegetables out of 10 available. For dessert there's always peanut-butter pie, a frozen creamy peanut-butter filling in a graham-cracker crust topped with chocolate syrup.

Location: Columbus, OH
Association members: Richard Stopper, Dan Berg
Operation: Fifty Five on the Boulevard
Profile: Fine dining
In business: 6 years
Seats: 190
Meals served: Lunch—Monday through Friday; dinner every night

Columbus's growing economy—it was named one of the top 10 growing cities by *Fortune* magazine—and a new City Center with restaurants, shops and theaters—helped make August "the best month we've ever had," according to Fifty Five on the Boulevard manager **Dan Berg.** The restaurant is located in a renovated warehouse near hotels and a little north of downtown. The decor is upscale modern, with light woods, art deco, flowers and plants. A focal point is a large hanging quilt, made by a local citizen.

The food at Fifty Five is new American cuisine, with an emphasis on fresh seafood. Every day six fresh-catch items are listed—usually salmon, swordfish, tuna, grouper, scrod and halibut.

The restaurant features regional dishes, such as Maryland-style crabcakes, paired with a complementary wine. Ethnic months have also proven to be popular.

Location: Tupelo, MS
Association members: T.M. Ashcraft, Carey Guy, Sue Howell
Operation: The Front Porch
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 4½ years
Seats: 240
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

The Front Porch is nestled in a cypress building in the town that is famous for being the birthplace of Elvis Presley.

Tourists often stop by the seafood restaurant, which offers a 20 percent discount to those holding a tourist card. In addition to catfish, the restaurant serves all kinds of seafood from the Gulf Coast and four types of steak. The restaurant's own seasoning accompanies the blackened dishes. Desserts include a cheesecake made by the owner's wife and a pecan pie made according to a recipe from manager **Sue Howell's** mother.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Steele, ND
Association members: Susie and Fred White
Operation: Lone Steer
Profile: Midscale restaurant open 24 hours a day
In business: 12 years
Seats: 75
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Steele, a small town halfway between Bismarck and Jamestown, is in a farm belt where the continuing drought has hurt the economy. But business at Lone Steer has been good, thanks to the town's centennial celebration this summer and a national bowling convention held recently in Bismarck. Owner **Susie White** expects to feel the effects of the drought this winter.

The Whites's restaurant, part of a 60-room motel, includes a coffee shop and a steakhouse. Homemade pies and breads—tomato, cheese and bacon, and vegetable—are so popular that they are often ordered for takeout.

Two years ago White and her cashier began a redecorating project that was planned to take two weeks; it took two years. Antique items are part of the new design, including the wedding gown worn by White's mother. Townspeople have added their own family treasures to the collection.

To compete with restaurants in Bismarck, White has begun offering a no-frills dinner—meat, potato, slaw and toast. With a large retirement home nearby and 55-and-older persons making up 70 percent of the county's population, she's also planning to run specials for senior citizens.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Metairie, LA
Association members: Richard Benson, Douglas Leman
Operation: The Caribbean Room
Profile: Fine dining
In business: 60 years
Seats: 200
Meals served: Lunch—Monday through Friday; dinner every night

An economy depressed by the oil slump and a glut of new hotels, many of which opened during the 1984 World's Fair, have not taken away business from the Ponchetrain Hotel and its restaurant, The Caribbean Room. In fact, the hotel in New Orleans's Garden District has become a landmark that attracts celebrities, out-of-towners and locals. "It is the only hotel dining room recommended by concierges at other hotels," says **Douglas Leman,** maitre d' for 37 years.

Dishes that have been popular over the years include *Trout Eugene*—trout sauteed then served with lump crab and two jumbo shrimp, with a lemon-butter sauce—and a Creole turtle soup. Also popular are blueberry muffins and Mile High Pie (pastry crust with three layers of ice cream and a meringue topping, adding up to a height of 12 to 18 inches).

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Rocksprings, WY
Association members: Frank and Wing Lew
Operation: Sands Cafe and Bar
Profile: Chinese/American restaurant
In business: 30 years
Seats: 225
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Co-owner **Frank Lew** calls Rocksprings a meat-and-potatoes town. Still, he and his brother have made a success of their restaurant, which features American and Chinese food. There were some tough times, Lew admits, when the bottom fell out of the oil and gas market, "but we pulled through; we're seasoned, and that's what you call true success, I guess."

The American part of the menu has steaks, shrimp cocktail, onion rings, salads. But the signature dish is Chinese—the Singapore chow mein, with beef, pork, shrimp and chicken, stir-fried with onions and Chinese vegetables and served with pan-fried noodles.

Besides the lounge and regular dining room, there is a coffee shop and a banquet room. The restaurant also has a cocktail lounge where people like to gather to cheer for the Broncos (they're 200 miles from Denver) and eat at the bar.

PACIFIC

Location: Roslyn, WA
Association members: Jo and Bob Cadwallader
Operation: Miners Cafe
Profile: Casual cafe
In business: 10 years
Seats: 38
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Roslyn, located 80 miles east of Seattle, was a coal-mining town until 1963—when the last mine closed and "the town just emptied." But some of the oldtimers are returning now to spend their retirement years in the familiar surroundings.

When the cafe moved into a new building two years ago, many customers brought their old mining tools to hang on the walls. There's a miner's cap, drills, picks and lanterns—"things I'd never sell because a lot of the owners are now dead, and they brought me their things to share with the world," says co-owner **Jo Cadwallader.**

Breakfast is the main meal at the cafe—some people drive in from Seattle just to have the country-style bone-in ham or German or Cajun sausage. Hamburgers are featured for lunch; their names evoke the mining era—such as the "Slag Pile"—ground beef on a French roll with a mixture of Swiss and Cheddar cheeses and mushrooms.

A boost in state tourism is bringing more visitors to the old town; and once they visit Miners Cafe, many come back. They're also apt to tell their friends about it. "Even in winter, when it can get lean, our business is gaining," says Cadwallader.

—Julie Fintel

Helping to save the rainforests

Concern about the devastation of the world's rainforests through overharvesting continues to mount. Environmentalists point to the deforestation as a major contributor to the

"greenhouse effect"—the trend toward global warming as more carbon dioxide is emanated, with less plant life to convert it to oxygen. But although there is a lot of talk about such serious environmental problems, it seems as though very little is being done about it.

One company—Community Products, Inc., based in Montpelier, Vermont—is trying to make a difference. The company was founded by Ben Cohen, of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream fame, who believes it is important for business to put its money where its mouth is when it comes to values. Community Products' first creation is "Rainforest Crunch," a brittle made of cashews and brazil nuts that are grown by farmers in the South American rainforests. The company purchases the nuts from pickers at a price three to 10 times higher than the amount they would receive for other labors, in effect deterring the growers from using the land for nonagricultural purposes.

Cohen was inspired to create the crunch when he attended a Grateful Dead benefit concert for the rainforests. Backstage, he asked rainforest activist Jason Clay what Ben & Jerry's could do to help, and Clay told him that using Brazil nuts—which can be harvested only from existing trees—would increase the demand for the nuts and therefore help to keep the forests alive and well.

Forty percent of the crunch's profits go to organizations that work to preserve the rainforests.

—Entrepreneur magazine

A good word from Mamma

Mamma Ilardo's Corporation, owner of seven pizzerias in the Washington DC/Baltimore area, offers its employees incentive through an aggressive employee-of-the-month contest. Every month, an employee in each unit wins the honor—and a $150 bonus—by gaining points in the following areas: uniforms and general appearance; attendance and promptness; proper use of time clock; willingness to work; conduct, teamwork and courtesy; job performance; job progression; and initiative. Employees can also receive additional points for introducing new menu or promotion ideas.

Mamma Ilardo's reports that its workers compete seriously for the award, and the winners are announced in the company's bimonthly newsletter.

—Mamma Ilardo's newsletter

No shortage of workers there

Unlike its American counterparts, the McDonald's restaurant scheduled to open in Moscow on January 31 is having no problem finding workers to flip burgers and bag fries. A single help-wanted ad in a Moscow newspaper generated 25,000 applicants to fill 630 jobs.

The Moscow McDonald's will be the the company's largest unit—with seating for 900, it is expected to serve 15,000 customers per day. The Soviet applicants—whose backgrounds range from recent university graduates to housewives reentering the workforce—have expressed their eagerness to start a career with McDonald's. By American standards, the rate of pay seems very low—only 1½

rubles per hour, which translates to a mere 25 cents using a new tourist rate of exchange.

With such an abundance of applicants, interviews have been taking 10 hours a day, seven days a week.

—The Washington Times

Coffee breaks with splash

Hawk's Cay Resort and Conference Center in Duck Key, Florida, is employing unusual ambassadors to attract conference business—dolphins and sea lions.

The resort's on-premises "Zoovet Program" features a dolphin show for its guests' enjoyment. Now the resort is urging meeting planners to schedule coffee breaks to coincide with the shows so that conferees can see the aquatic performers. Or meeting-goers can simply wander out to the "Dolphin Deck," which is adjacent to the conference center, during breaks in their program and have coffee with Claude—a 450-pound sea lion who has become a favorite performer.

—Julie Simon Communications

Domino's runs for shelter

Thirty employees from Domino's Pizza headquarters in Ann Arbor, Michigan, laced up their running shoes this fall for a good cause—collecting funds for the Harriet Tubman shelter for Battered Women in Chicago.

The employees who ran the Old Style Marathon in Chicago in October collected pledges for each mile they ran. At the end of the 26-mile event, the runners had garnered a total of $3,000.

—Domino's Pizza, Inc.

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